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John Wesley.

WESLEY

AND HIS FRIENDS:

ILLUSTRATING

THE RELIGIOUS SPIRIT OF THEIR TIMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"TOWERS OF ZION," "TRIUMPHS OF INDUSTRY," ETC.

1871

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PREFACE.

In collecting the materials for this work, the author has assured himself of their authenticity, even to the slightest incidental illustration; and he has attempted to present them in a style adapted to the youngest and not distasteful to the oldest reader.

It will be seen that the arrangement of the matter of the volume is somewhat topical; while the chronological order of events is, it is hoped, sufficiently indicated. The adoption of this course has much increased the labour of compilation, but we think it will add to the interest and impressiveness of the work.

The author is aware of the difficulty of presenting a sketch of Wesley so as to give an outline of his character and the im-

portant facts of his long and eventful life, yet not obtrude offensively upon the honest sentiments of those who differ from him in some points both of doctrine and practice. With a full conviction of these difficulties, he has written right on, aiming to speak candidly, and presuming upon the candour of his readers.

He now sends forth the results of his labour on its errand of love, earnestly desiring that to the mature Christian it may be a voice of encouragement, to the young convert a stimulus to diligent labour, and to all a source of interest and instruction.

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LIFE OF JOHN WESLEY.

CHAPTER I.

JOHN WESLEY'S ANCESTORS.

JOHN WESLEY could not say, as Napoleon once said, "I am the first of my family." Among his ancestors there had been many noted ministers.

BARTHOLOMEW WESLEY, his great-grandfather, was rector of Catherston, in Dorsetshire, England, in 1650, but was removed from the ministry for not *conforming* to the national church. He was educated at Oxford University. He was noted for a peculiar plainness of speech, which rendered his preaching not very popular.

JOHN WESLEY, son of Bartholomew, was also a minister, but not very regularly introduced into the holy office, according to the laws of his country. After receiving his education at Oxford, he became a member of "a particular

church at Melcombe." His father had earnestly prayed at his birth that he might be called to the sacred office. He had educated him in reference to a spiritual as well as literary preparation for its duties. While a mere lad in school, he had become deeply convinced of sin, and was seriously concerned for his salvation, which he sought with great earnestness. He began at this early period to keep a diary, which he continued until his death, noting in it his varied experience in the divine life. This example was, no doubt, the spring in part of the same practice with his eminent grandson. He began his public labours by calling the seamen of his neighbourhood to repentance; and, God blessing his labours, he was sent forth to preach by "the particular church" of which he was a member. For this irregularity he was desired to allow the bishop to see and converse with him. We present a part of the conversation between them, as it exhibits the peculiar *Wesleyan* spirit of the preacher and the very candid and liberal conduct of the prelate.

Bishop.—What is your name?

Wesley.—John Wesley.

Bishop.—There are many matters charged against you.

Wesley.—May it please your lordship, Mr. Horlock was at my house on Tuesday night, and acquainted me that it was your lordship's desire I should come to you; and on that account I am here to wait upon you.

Bishop.—By whom were you ordained? or are you ordained?

Wesley.—I am sent to preach the gospel.

Bishop.—By whom were you sent?

Wesley.—By a church of Jesus Christ.

Bishop.—What church is that?

Wesley.—The church of Christ at Malcombe.

Bishop.—In what manner did the church you speak of send you to preach? At this rate, everybody might preach.

Wesley.—Not every one. Everybody has not preaching gifts and preaching graces. Besides, this is not all I have to offer your lordship to justify my preaching.

Bishop.—If you preach, it must be according to order,—the order of the Church of England upon ordination.

Wesley.—What does your lordship mean by an ordination?

Bishop.—Do you not know what I mean?

Wesley.—If you mean that sending spoken of in Rom. x., I had it.

Bishop.—I mean that. What mission had you?

Wesley.—I had a mission from God and man.

Bishop.—You must have it according to law and the Church of England.

Wesley.—I desire several things may be laid together which I look on as justifying my preaching. 1. I was devoted to the service from my infancy. 2. I was educated thereto

at school and in the university. 3. As a son of a prophet, after I had taken my degrees, I preached in the country, being approved by judicious, able Christians, ministers and others. 4. It pleased God to seal my labour with success, in the apparent conversion of several souls.

Bishop.—Well, then, you will justify your preaching, will you, without ordination according to law?

Wesley.—All these things laid together are satisfactory to me for my procedure therein.

Bishop.—Have you any thing more to say to me, Mr. Wesley?

Wesley.—Nothing. Your lordship sent for me.

Bishop.—I am glad I heard this from your mouth. You will stand to your principles, you say?

Wesley.—I intend it through the grace of God; and to be faithful to the king's majesty, however you deal with me.

Bishop.—I will not meddle with you.

Wesley.—Farewell to you, sir.

Bishop.—Farewell, good Mr. Wesley.

The bishop was as liberal in practice with the lay preacher as he had been plain in speech. He never "meddled" with him. But there were a few only, in those times of excited passions, who were like-minded. At the age of twenty-two, Mr. Wesley preached to a company of believers at Winterborn, on a yearly

income of about one hundred and thirty dollars. He married a relation of the celebrated Dr. Thomas Fuller, chaplain to Charles II., a lady of superior education, ability and religious worth. But he was not long permitted to enjoy domestic felicity. He was prosecuted, fined, and removed from his people, for lay preaching, after having ministered to them about four years. He then itinerated through several towns, preaching in private dwellings to congregations of humble and sympathizing people. His words were earnest, practical, and imbued with a deep spirituality; and, as it was with his Master, "the common people heard him gladly." At length a friend gave him the use of a house at Preston, free of rent. Here and in the neighbourhood he preached the word in a private manner until his death, not, however, without many interruptions and much sacrifice and suffering. Soon after his removal to this place, a law passed Parliament that no ejected minister should reside within five miles of the people for whom he had formerly laboured. As Preston was only three miles from Melcombe, complaints were entered against him and he was obliged to leave his family and conceal himself. He was frequently arrested for attempting to exercise the duties of his holy calling, and was four times imprisoned.

He continued thus to suffer and to preach until he was about forty-two years of age, when

God removed him to his reward. His widow survived him thirty-two years, enduring the burdens imposed by poverty, and meeting with Christian firmness and integrity the responsibilities of a family at first numerous, but reduced, early in her widowhood, to two sons.

We have dwelt thus long upon this ancestor of the second John Wesley, because there are so many striking points of resemblance between them. We see in the former the independence of thought and speech and action of the latter. The one practised as a lay preacher what the other defended and encouraged, and on the same grounds. Though the grandson was more successful and became more celebrated, yet in the history of John Wesley, Sen., we may trace the starting-point of the spirit, if not the form, of *Methodism*.

The grandfather of John Wesley on his mother's side was Dr. Samuel Annesley, who from his early childhood was remarkable for his love of the Scriptures. When only six years of age he was in the habit of reading twenty chapters a day. Both his mother and grandmother had prayed that he might become a preacher of the gospel; and he was educated according to this hope.

At the age of fifteen he entered Oxford University. Here he lived so plainly and was so constantly engaged with his books that the young men pointed at him as singular. But this did not move him. Through his diligence

he graduated as one of the best scholars. From his youth he desired to become a minister, and now he began to preach. His first employment was as a chaplain on board one of the king's ships. After spending some time in this situation he left the sea and settled in a parish from which the minister who preceded him had been removed for uniting with dancing and drinking-parties on the Sabbath. The people had been like their minister. But their new pastor began to reprove them faithfully. For this they assailed him with pitchforks and stones, and threatened to take away his life. Instead of becoming angry or leaving them, he calmly said, "Use me as you will; I am determined to stay with you until God shall fit you by my ministry to profit by one better; and I now promise that when you are so prepared I will leave the place."

In a few years the people were greatly reformed. Many had become truly pious, and all were much attached to their pastor. But, lest the cause of religion should suffer by any apparent want of honesty in him in not keeping his engagement, he left them, as he had promised.

When the Parliament made the law to which we have referred, requiring all ministers to *conform* to the Church of England, Dr. Annesley was one who thought he could better serve God by not doing so. He therefore was removed from a very honourable place which he

occupied in the king's service at London, and suffered much, though far less than the other grandfather of John Wesley. He continued to preach until the year of his death, which occurred in the seventy-seventh year of his age. He died after a long and painful sickness, exclaiming with his latest breath, "I shall be satisfied! *satisfied!* O my dearest Jesus! I come!"

It is an interesting fact, especially in connection with the biography which we are writing, that this distinguished man lived under great self-discipline. He drank only water. He studied in a room at the top of his house, with the windows open and without fire, summer and winter. He had considerable income from property he had inherited, besides his salary; but he set apart one tenth for benevolent purposes of all he received, before using a dollar in any other way.

Such were some of the sources of ancestral influence in the character of the founder of Methodism.

Wesley's Father.

CHAPTER II.

WESLEY'S PARENTS.

EPWORTH, in England, is a small market-town, one hundred and ten miles northwest of London, in Lincolnshire. It contained in Wesley's day about two thousand inhabitants, whose principal occupation was the raising and preparation of hemp and flax, and in manufacturing coarse articles out of those materials. To this village the Rev. Samuel Wesley, the father of John Wesley, removed in 1693. He became the rector of the church on an income of about five hundred dollars. The house in which he first lived, though differing in style, somewhat resembled a Western log-cabin of our own country. It was built of timber and mud, plastered without, and thatched with straw.

Samuel Wesley, of whom we are now writing, was about ten years old when his father, the first John Wesley, died. He had, even then, received from his learned father a good beginning of a knowledge of Latin and Greek.

Notwithstanding his father and grandfather suffered much for dissenting from the established church, Samuel became a zealous de-

fender of its doctrines and government at the early age of sixteen. The following year he walked to Oxford, with about twelve dollars in his pocket and no expectation of assistance from his friends, and entered Exeter College. By economizing rigidly and helping some of the collegians in their studies, and by writing for the press, he paid the whole expense of his collegiate course, and after his graduation walked to London to obtain ordination. After various changes, we find him settled in the parish we have described. To this people he ministered forty years, and with them closed his earthly labours.

Samuel Wesley was a good classical scholar. He studied the Scriptures diligently in their original languages. In the latter part of his life he wrote a learned comment on the book of Job, upon which he bestowed much labour. Some of his hymns have been sung by thousands of the people of God until now, and will long remain among the songs of Zion. The well-known hymn commencing

"Behold the Saviour of mankind"

was written by him.

He was a faithful preacher, with much of the plainness of speech which belonged to all the Wesley family. He was diligent in overseeing the spiritual interests of his flock, visiting the sick, instructing the children, and seeking acquaintance with the strangers who came among

them. He died in great peace in Christ, in 1735, aged seventy-two.

Susannah, mother of John Wesley, was one of twenty-five children of Dr. Samuel Annesley. She was a woman of remarkable personal beauty. But she was distinguished for a higher recommendation than that. She had a well-cultivated mind, read Latin and Greek with readiness, and had a good acquaintance with the more common branches of education. Partaking of the spirit of her father, she delighted most in theological study, not even neglecting difficult questions of religious controversy. When only sixteen years of age, she examined the questions in dispute between the Dissenters and the established church, and, notwithstanding the influence of her father's example and her early education, decided in favour of the latter, and became from that time one of its most zealous members. She was married to Samuel Wesley at the age of twenty. She was, by natural gift and education, methodical and energetic. Her peculiar system of teaching her children to read was suggested by an incident in the early life of her first-born son, Samuel. Yet the use she made of the circumstance exhibits her systematic habits.

Samuel was dumb until he was five years old, and, it was feared, would never speak. His mother, having missed him one day for a considerable time, called out, with some earnestness, "Where is Samuel?" Samuel at that

moment came creeping from his hiding-place with a favourite kitten in his arms, with which he had been playing, and exclaimed, "Here am I, mother." From that time he spoke readily.

She commenced immediately to teach him to read. She taught him the whole alphabet in six hours given to that one object, and then set him to read the first verses of Genesis. His mother said of him at a subsequent time that his memory was so good that she could not remember having to tell him the same word twice. Mrs. Wesley became the teacher of her children through all their primary education. Her system was rigid. Six hours a day were assigned for study. During this time they were kept closely to their books, without being allowed to rise unnecessarily from their places or to speak to each other. At the end of the first three months of study—that is, when they were five years and a quarter old—they could read better, the mother affirms, "than most persons can do as long as they live."

A regular method of living was required of the children, from their birth, as to their dressing and all their domestic and personal habits. From the time they were put in their cradles there was a fixed period for their sleeping and waking, to which the children had to conform. Their meals and their behaviour at table were regulated with great strictness; and, by beginning early in their discipline, perfect order

and obedience were secured in the family. They were brought up to treat all persons with respect; they were not allowed to be rude and boisterous, and were forbidden to keep company with those who would teach them bad language or rough manners.

Mrs. Wesley made the instant and unquestioning obedience of the children a principal point. This requirement was early made and never relinquished.

To the Lord's Prayer were added other prayers from time to time, as they could understand them. They were taught to ask a blessing at the close of the family prayers, as soon as they could speak sufficiently; and before this age they were instructed to do it by signs.

They were early shown the duty of regarding the Sabbath with great respect. Reverence for every ordinance of God was so deeply impressed upon their minds that, by the divine blessing, throughout the lives of the children it became inseparable from their thoughts and actions.

Among the "By-laws," as she called them, in the discipline of Mrs. Wesley, were the following:—To encourage a frank confession of a fault by a lighter punishment, or an entire acquittal, as a consequence; and not to upbraid the children for faults which they had confessed or for which they had been corrected. She invariably commended them for the performance

of a right act, especially if it was difficult or required much self-denial.

The disciplinary care for her children of this remarkable woman was not thrown off when they arrived at a responsible age and were removed from the parental roof. During the residence of her sons John and Charles at the academies where they completed their preparations for the University and during their collegiate days, her letters to them are as remarkable as her previous discipline. If they were perplexed with a difficult point in religion, she discussed it with them, and not unfrequently removed their doubts. When they were perplexed concerning practical duties, the mother's letters, more explicitly and fully than the father's, instructed them.

When her children's minds were in the most susceptible state to receive religious instructions, she wrote out for them at large the evidences of Christianity, and prepared a brief explanation of the leading doctrines of Scripture.

An incident in the history of Mrs. Wesley shows that others shared in the interest she felt in the salvation of souls. Her husband was frequently absent at Convocation, as it was called, of the representatives of the church, at London. During one of these seasons, on a Sabbath, after the service, she was reading and expounding portions of the Bible to her family. This was usual with her; but her heart was at

this time unusually moved for the salvation of souls. One of her daughters had been reading to her a history of the Danish missions. The sufferings of the missionaries and their intense desire for the salvation of men had greatly quickened her religious feelings. Under these circumstances, some of the parishioners who were providentially present were greatly interested, and felt deeply under her burning words. They returned home and related to their neighbours what they had heard. Others on the next Sabbath came together, and were equally interested. On succeeding Sabbath afternoons the parsonage was thronged, not less than two hundred pressing together to hear the word.

The assistant minister whom Mr. Wesley had left in charge of his parish was an ignorant man. He became jealous and highly indignant at this labour of the rector's wife, considering it an invasion of his ministerial sphere.

Before the assistant's anger had shown itself, Mrs. Wesley had written to her husband, informing him what the Lord had wrought by her hands. He cautiously objected that her course was singular; that it might seem unsuited to her sex, and that it might be deemed a reproach to his public station: to which she replied, that all seriousness and earnest labour for souls was singular to an irreligious world; that it could not be an impropriety for a woman

even, to read from God's book, and to add words of instruction to her children, her servants and others, in her own house; and that his station could not be disgraced by her thus labouring in his absence to secure the great end of a Christian ministry. Mr. Wesley was satisfied, and withdrew his objections.

Thus matters stood when the assistant began to manifest his jealousy. He wrote Mr. Wesley a fiery letter. Terrible things, he said, had happened at the parsonage. The cause of ministerial dignity had been greatly disparaged. Mrs. Wesley was holding a "Conventicle,"—a name given in derision to the assemblies of Dissenters, and very offensive to their ears. Mr. Wesley was alarmed. His concern for exact conformity to the requirements of the church was a ruling feeling of his mind. He wrote a letter to his wife, requesting her to discontinue the meetings. She received the request with great self-possession, and answered it with firmness and overpowering argument. She said that through the meetings of which his assistant complained, the affections of the people had been turned more than ever to their pastor's family, thereby affording them a greater means of doing them good; that Sabbath-breaking had been generally discontinued; that from two to three hundred persons came to evening lectures in the church, to which only twenty or twenty-five came before; and that persons had attended the ministrations

of the house of God on the Sabbath who had not been for seven years before. She also urged the evident misrepresentations of the assistant, and his plain unfitness to judge in matters of practical piety.

The latter reason may seem uncharitable to Christians of this age, when ministers are expected to be, and so generally are, men of real godliness. But it was not so one hundred and fifty years ago.

Mrs. Wesley closed her letter by saying that, since religion might be so much injured by the discontinuance of the meetings, she desired not his request merely, but his command, to discontinue them.

The piety, good sense and sound reasoning of Mrs. Wesley prevailed. The meetings, under her influential guidance, increased in religious interest; and the parish was blessed by what would now be designated as a "revival of religion." Souls were believed to be converted to Christ, and an extensive reformation of the outward manners of the people followed.

The reader will not fail to discern, in what we have written of this remarkable woman, strong religious feeling, great earnestness and a rare gift of influencing others.

We see in her character the leading features of the character of her most eminent son, and in the influence exerted by her at Epworth, the

seeds of the work of which he was so prominent an instrument.

Mrs. Wesley survived her husband about seven years, and lived to see in its earliest stages the reformation under her sons and their coadjutors, and to rejoice greatly in it.

Residence of Wesley's Family.

CHAPTER III.

FORMING-PERIOD OF WESLEY'S CHARACTER.

THE character and habits of some of the ancestors of John Wesley have been laid before the reader, not merely because of the relationship of these persons to the subject of this volume, but chiefly to show the connection between his own qualities and those of the persons who had the greatest influence in forming his character. To the observing mind, this will be an interesting and instructive preparation for the more immediate subject of our narrative.

John Wesley was born June 17, 1703, in the old timber-and-mud and straw-thatched parsonage of Epworth. The means of his parents were hardly sufficient, with all Mr. Wesley's economy, for the support of the large family; and their trials in this respect were increased by the burning of their dwelling and all it contained.

This event, which took place in 1709, was attended by a circumstance of striking interest connected with John Wesley.

Mrs. Wesley, being sick, was sleeping with the two oldest daughters. Mr. Wesley was in

an adjoining room. The servant-girl was sleeping in the nursery with five of the children, and one daughter was in a room alone. About twelve o'clock at night the last-mentioned child was awakened by a spark from the roof falling upon her bed. At the same instant Mr. Wesley was aroused by the cry in the street of "Fire!" Springing to his feet, he soon found it was his own house. He then aroused Mrs. Wesley, and bade her escape with the two daughters while he alarmed the others and assisted in their rescue. Bursting open the nursery-door, he called to the servant-girl to flee with the children with all possible haste. Then taking the two youngest, she told the next to follow. When they had reached the lower hall, Mr. Wesley recollected that he had left in the chamber the key of the front door. He had just, with the utmost haste, recovered it, when the stairs were burned away and fell. On attempting to open the door leading to the street, the wind drove the smoke and flames so violently against them that they found it impossible to get out in that direction. The distressed father hastened with the children to another door which opened into the garden, through which he with a part of the children reached the open air. Others of them followed through a window. But Mrs. Wesley, being weak with her recent sickness, lingered behind. She had made several ineffectual attempts to follow. Her strength being nearly exhausted, she earn-

estly besought the Saviour for help, and then she pressed her way, amid the scorching heat, through the garden-door.

The happy parents were about to congratulate themselves that all had been delivered from the fire, when the cry of little John was heard at the nursery-window. In the hurry the servant had forgotten him! He lay sleeping until the light of the burning roof above streamed upon his head and awakened him. Thinking it was morning, he called to be taken up. Seeing fire, and finding he was alone, he climbed upon a chest under the window and cried piteously. Some of the men called for a ladder. "No," said one more thoughtful, "there will not be time to get one before the roof falls in. Let me stand under the window, and some tall man stand upon my shoulders and reach the child." They did so, and the parents soon embraced all their children.

"Come, neighbours," said Mr. Wesley, seeing that all had escaped, "let us kneel down and give thanks to God. I have all my children, and I am rich enough." And there, at midnight, while the flames were making them homeless and destitute, their thanksgiving arose to God.

The cause of this disaster was thought to be the anger of some of Mr. Wesley's parishioners leading them to set fire to his house. They had resented his plain-dealing. He had been unsparing in his rebukes of their outbreaking sins.

This narrow escape of little Wesley impressed his parents with the idea that God had preserved the child for some special work. The mother expresses her feelings in a recorded evening meditation, entitled "Son John:"—"I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that Thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may do my endeavour to instil into his mind the principles of thy true religion and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success."

The influence of brothers and sisters upon each other in a well-regulated family is eminently useful. They stimulate each other's religious feelings, and sharpen by contact each other's intellects, especially if they possess more than common ability. We should not therefore exhibit all the forming influences in the early days of John Wesley, if we did not at least glance at the family circle and briefly sketch the brothers and sisters.

Samuel Wesley, Jr., the eldest son, was eleven years older than John. He exercised almost a parent's care over his younger brothers and sisters. He assisted his father in his poverty from his own small income, at a great sacrifice of personal convenience. He supported in part his brothers John and Charles in college. He became a minister of the Established church and an acknowledged friend

and intimate of the great and good of his age. He possessed the family plainness of speech and independence of action, which, it is said, prevented his advancement in the church, especially as he was on the unpopular side in politics. He wrote poetry with considerable success. The beautiful hymn beginning,

"The morning flowers display their sweets,"

was written by him. His brother John must of necessity have felt the favourable influence of such a brother.

Charles Wesley's history is so interwoven with John's, that we shall unavoidably narrate much of it in the course of this biography. He was five years younger than John. In his boyhood he possessed much vivacity, and he was full of impulsive and generous feeling. If John was inclined to be retiring and sedate, Charles could rouse him from his reveries and quicken his love of humour and playfulness. Charles had, more than any of the family, the temperament of a poet.

But the influence of the seven sisters who grew up to womanhood must not be left out of the account of the formation of a brother's character. Five of them were older than John. Emily, who exercised over him an older sister's care, possessed a noble yet affable countenance and a kind and affectionate heart. Susannah, next in age, was "beautiful," facetious and romantic.

Mary received in her infancy, from the carelessness of her nurse, a deformed body. But nature had given her, in compensation, a beautiful countenance, an amiable disposition and rare endowments of mind. She was the favourite of the family.

Mehetabel, known among the children of the family as "Hetty," and sometimes "Kitty," was the scholar among the sisters, and even perhaps excelled her brothers in aptness for learning. At eight years of age she had made a good beginning in Latin and read the Greek Testament with facility. She was from childhood gay and sprightly. She indulged her wit so freely that it gave her parents some solicitude. It was indeed a snare to her. She was the last of the children who became a subject of saving grace.

Anne came next in age; and, though possibly not acting the least part in the childish influences of the family, yet of her the least is known. But Martha, next younger than John, left her mark on her associates. She preferred to sit near her mother in her chamber and listen to her conversation, to joining in the recreations of the children. Martha's partiality for her mother scarcely exceeded John's partiality for Martha. This arose in part, perhaps, from their striking resemblance in features and similarity in disposition. Even their handwriting was almost identical in appearance.

John and Martha were united in strong af-

The Charter House.

fection in childhood and through a long life of nearly ninety years, and in death were not divided. They died within a few months of each other, and were the last of the family.

Keziah, the only remaining sister, was distinguished from the others by a constitutional feebleness of body, which served to call into action their sympathy and impress them more deeply with the greatness of their own blessing of good health.

In the bosom of such a family, surrounded by such brothers and sisters, the early mental and religious habits of John Wesley were formed.

When eleven years old, he was placed at the Charter-House School in London. A city is a dangerous place to which to bring from the country a boy of that age. But John Wesley's home-discipline, by the blessing of God, proved a safeguard against its temptations. His teacher was amiable and accomplished. The government of the school was in striking contrast with that he had up to this time attended under his mother's guidance in the Epworth parsonage. The larger boys tyrannized over the smaller ones, and were to a great extent masters of the school. Notwithstanding his bad treatment from the older boys, his recollections of this school, in manhood, were pleasant. He visited the spot frequently during his after-life, and lingered around its premises with unabated interest. Though not then pious, he had been

diligent in his studies, respectful to his teachers, and careful of his health and morals. He could therefore in manhood look upon the time-worn buildings of the institution without shame.

At the age of sixteen, Wesley entered Oxford University. Here were fresh studies, new scenes, and imminent dangers to his moral habits. In the English universities at that time only a small number of the students were there because they valued an education. They were the sons of rich and titled families, to whom the empty name of a university education had some attractions. The care of Wesley's parents followed him within the college walls. With his mother especially he advised during the years of his college-course, and was made to feel, by her frequent and vigorous letters, that he was still under her eye. He devoted himself so diligently to the Greek language that his fellow-students called him "the Grecian." During the four years which passed while he was preparing for the degree of Bachelor of Arts, he was an ambitious and successful student. He had entered college with a thorough preparation, good health, and firm moral principles; but we have no evidence that during this important period he was particularly interested in the duties of religion. He had been admitted to the Lord's supper at eight years of age by his father, and of this solemn ordinance he continued to partake, but not with heart-felt interest. His affections were on

books, attainments and distinctions. He was accomplished and respected, and had before him a wide field in which to gratify his love of learning. In the midst of such pleasing prospects, how many young men forget God! So, in a measure, had John Wesley forgotten him, until God's Spirit used new occasions to re-impress his mind with the importance, above every thing, of the life to come.

CHAPTER IV.

WESLEY A RESIDENT GRADUATE AT OXFORD.

THE universities of England are quite different from those of the United States. Each one includes many colleges. That of Oxford has twenty. Each of these colleges has its separate teachers, funds and examinations. After the student has received his degree of Bachelor of Arts, he usually remains to pursue his studies until he receives the degree of Master of Arts.

John Wesley, having now taken his first degree, began to reflect seriously upon the solemn responsibilities of becoming a gospel minister, as his parents desired him to be. What were the proper motives for wishing to become one? Was he prepared in heart for so great a work? Could he, with a good conscience before God, take upon himself its solemn ordination-vows? These were questions, with many others, which he proposed to himself; and they induced the most searching self-examination. He wrote to his parents on the subject. His father reminded him that none should take this office upon himself except he was called to it by the Holy Ghost, and that his motive must be God's

glory. He thought he need be in no haste to be ordained, but that further study, writing and prayer would afford clear light concerning his duty. His mother recommended a close self-examination, an entire devotion to religious things, and a diligent seeking after personal salvation, lest after having preached to others he might lose his own soul.

In accordance with this advice, he waited one year, and was ordained a deacon in the Established church in the autumn of the year 1725, being about twenty-two years of age.

In the spring of 1726, a "Fellowship" had become vacant in Lincoln College. The "Fellows" are chosen from the graduates of the University. The best scholars are selected as candidates. They are required to submit to a strict examination in all the branches of accomplished scholarship. The ablest scholar, in the judgment of a thoroughly-educated committee, obtains the place. The Fellows generally reside at the college, receive room-rent, board, and about nine hundred dollars salary, and appear to be required to do nothing more than to sustain the character of accomplished scholars. From their number the tutors are commonly chosen, so that the way to a professorship and other offices in the college lies through a Fellowship.

Wesley's friends desired him to become a candidate for the vacant position, and exerted their influence to secure his election. But a

violent opposition was raised against it. His singular strictness of life, which had now become known among the residents of the university, was urged against him. Abundance of ridicule was hurled at his character, but it fell harmless at his feet. His integrity and scholarship could not be questioned, and, his examination being satisfactory, he was elected to the Fellowship.

After the election he removed to his rooms in Lincoln College. In his previous relation to Christ's Church College he had been annoyed by undesirable acquaintances. Having no associates in his new position, he determined to select only congenial spirits. Many young men called upon him. All of them he treated courteously, and observed closely the spirit of each one. Such of them as he thought would be profitable to him in carrying out his settled purpose to live only for God he called upon. The others, having visited him once or twice, and seeing that their proposed acquaintance was not accepted, called no more. Thus his associates became few and select.

In April, 1726, Mr. Wesley visited Epworth. He preached frequently for his father, and assisted him in various ways in his public duties. His studies were pursued with the same regularity and industry as if he were at the university. He availed himself of the opportunity to converse with his parents on religious topics. This he did especially with his mother. He

referred to her doctrinal and practical questions by which he was perplexed. Very few children ever recognized more fully parental superiority. He who subsequently did so much in governing others had fully submitted even in manhood to parental government; and he who so successfully became a teacher of multitudes had first sought a mother's instruction.

He returned in September to college, and was appointed Greek lecturer and presiding officer of the meetings of the classes for disputation, which were held six times a week. Logic had been a favorite study with him, and this office gratified his taste and improved his power of discrimination. He was at the same time pursuing his studies with great regularity. After having, in February, 1727, taken his Master's degree, he was left at liberty to select his own course of study, and he adopted the following. Mondays and Tuesdays were devoted to Greek and Roman classics, historians and poets; Wednesdays to logic and ethics; Thursdays to Hebrew and Arabic; Fridays to metaphysics and natural philosophy; Saturdays to oratory and poetry,—chiefly composing; and Sundays to divinity. Occasional hours were given to acquiring a more perfect knowledge of French, to letter-writing and general reading. He read with pen in hand, copying such passages as he esteemed of special value. He began about this time to note in a journal,

more particularly than he had done, how he spent each hour, and to record the most important daily events of his life. This journalizing he continued, recording with great particularity the varied scenes of nearly seventy years. About this period he commenced conversing with his brother Charles in Latin,—a practice which they continued through life.

Mr. Wesley's father had the "living"—that is, the charge and the income—of a small parish, in addition to that of Epworth, in the adjoining town of Wroote. As he was now infirm, and evidently approaching the close of his ministry, he requested John to remove to Wroote and to assist him in the labour of both parishes. John, in compliance, removed thither in August, 1727, and remained until August, 1729, at which time he was recalled to the duties of his relations to Lincoln College. While at Wroote he was ordained to the full office of the ministry.

Having thus followed Mr. Wesley's literary and professional history from his graduation at college, we invite the reader's undivided attention to his efforts during this period and the remainder of his stay at Oxford to obtain the favour of God. We have noticed the awakened convictions which his ordination to deacon's orders excited. He read about this time "The Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis, and Bishop Taylor's "Rules of Holy Living and Dying." They produced a deep impression

upon his mind. Taylor's views of purity of intention, in which he dwells upon the duty of doing all to the glory of God, astonished him. He taught that in all our worldly business we must have this end in view; and that to aim sincerely at the glory of God we must have our hearts right with him. The "Imitation of Christ" set forth the duty of self-denial far too much in the spirit of the Roman Catholic requirements of fasting and penance. Though Wesley did not receive his opinions in this respect, they seem to have influenced his practice greatly, if not unduly.

While Wesley was striving to improve under these instructors, he read "Law's Serious Call to a Holy Life." He formed a personal intimacy with the author, who then resided near London. To his residence he made frequent visits, to obtain from him directions in his efforts to be holy. Wesley was at first discouraged by Law's high standard of Christian attainment, and hinted his feelings to him. Law replied, "We must aim at the highest degree of perfection, if we may thereby at least attain to mediocrity." Thus stimulated, Wesley more than ever began to work out his salvation with an unbounded zeal and an unwavering integrity; but with a partial misapprehension of the way in which God was to "*work in him*" to make him truly a Christian. He says he resolved to dedicate *all* his life to God,—all his thoughts and words and actions,

—being thoroughly convinced there was no medium, but that every part of his life must be a sacrifice to God. He began with greater diligence to study the Bible,—to learn to walk as Christ walked,—being afraid of allowing the least want of conformity to his divine Master.

It was in this frame of mind that he left Oxford to officiate as his father's assistant at Wroote. At this time his brother Charles entered Christ College as a student, being about eighteen years of age. His love of lively company and worldly amusement had become a ruling passion. These, more than his studies, occupied his attention. John expostulated with him; but to his serious persuasions he returned a jocose answer. But during John's absence Charles became an earnest seeker of religion. His change of purpose was referable, he thought, under God, to his mother's prayers and teachings. He immediately sought and found a few congenial spirits. They met occasionally for mutual instruction. They agreed to conform to all the college rules; to receive the sacrament once a week, and to live strictly *by method.* This practice, which they diligently carried out, immediately excited much attention. The students generally were the sons of rich and aristocratical parents, and were loose in their morals, being accustomed to the freest indulgence. The little company living in self-de-

nial could not, therefore, fail to receive an abundance of ridicule. "They are a new sect," exclaimed one, "of '*Methodists.*'" He might have referred to a class of ancient physicians who were so named, or to a religious sect of the preceding century who were thus distinguished; or he might have meant simply to designate their exact method of living. From this passing remark grew the name of the Christian denomination of which John Wesley is esteemed the founder.

When John again assumed his duties at Oxford, in 1729, he found Charles and his little band steadily pursuing their course. They immediately received him as their acknowledged head and leader.

At this point in John Wesley's history (1729)—when he united with the band of which Charles was really the originator—is commonly dated the rise of Methodism. The most prominent of this company during the following five years were—John and Charles Wesley; Mr. Morgan, of Christ College; Mr. Merton, of Merton College, and, later, James Hervey, and the afterwards-distinguished George Whitefield. A few of the students of the brothers were at times members.

This little band, in their efforts to do good, began first with the students of the university. They did not at all times and in all places urge religion upon their attention. This

would have been unwise; but they sought for proper occasions and favourable moments. At one time, John Wesley invited a young man of his acquaintance to walk with him. They passed around the grounds of a neighbouring church. At that moment the funeral-procession of a young lady of their acquaintance entered the yard. The time and place were suited to impress religious truths. Stopping short, Wesley, looking solemnly upon his friend, said, "You, no doubt, are my friend. Why, then, will you not do me all the good you can?" The young man began to assure him he certainly would, when Wesley replied, abruptly, "Then oblige me in this instance—which you know to be in your power — by allowing me to persuade you to be a whole Christian." The earnestness and sincerity of Wesley deeply impressed his friend. He became from that hour earnestly engaged to save his soul.

Sometimes Wesley and his friends would invite the students to tea. They would engage their attention by kindness and courtesy—by assisting them in their studies, and other unobtrusive attentions. Thus preparing the way, they would invite them "to flee from the wrath to come."

To the new students before they had formed unfavourable acquaintances, and to the serious, they were especially attentive. They called upon them often, and addressed them

affectionately and plainly concerning their spiritual state.

Enlarging their field of labour, they next sought the prisoners of the jails of the vicinity. With them they read the Scriptures, conversed and prayed, leaving them such books and giving them such advice as they thought proper. For such prisoners as were confined for small debts they collected a fund, by which many poor but honest men were restored to liberty and their homes.

John Wesley says that it was by his attempts to address the prisoners whom he at this time visited that he learned to use that simple style of language by which afterwards he was enabled to write for and to preach to multitudes of the unlearned. He soon perceived that these men understood plain English words only; and through life, in his ordinary labours, he seldom made a Greek or Latin quotation, or alluded to the literature of those languages, though they were quite familiar to him.

The poor families of the neighbourhood next claimed their attention. Upon these, when necessary, they bestowed small sums of money, not only to relieve their wants, but, through these gifts, to obtain a more ready access to their religious interests. They instructed their children in the catechism, and formed among them schools, to teach them the common branches of education. For several of these schools John Wesley provided clothes

for the scholars and the pay of the teachers from his own purse. That they might have money for these charities, they dressed and lived in the plainest manner, and performed all their journeys on foot. During their years of residence at Oxford John and Charles Wesley made their frequent visits to Epworth and London in this way. The distance to the former place, taking in the places they usually visited, must have been about two hundred miles. During these long walks they accustomed themselves to read, which they declared to be practicable and pleasant, and thus saving many days to the acquisition of knowledge. The mode of life which these young men pursued—particularly their exposures and self-denials in doing good—brought upon them great ridicule and reproach. They were called "Bible Moths," "Bible Bigots," "The Holy Club," and "The Godly Club." Some persons of reputed piety and influence being drawn into the opposition, their friends grew cold, and some of their number left them. The answer, if any, which this company made to those who thought them too "singular" and complained of their "over much" piety, was, in effect, "Is not the end we seek—eternal life—worth our pains?"

In 1733, Wesley made a visit to Epworth, on account of the feeble health of his father. The aged rector, who had now, for forty years, proclaimed the word of life in that

place, felt that the time was drawing near that he must die. His ten children assembled about him. It was their last general meeting.

During this meeting it was hinted to John that it was the wish of the family that he should succeed his father in the parish at Epworth. He thought it was not his duty to accept the position. His reasons seemed to centre in this one,—he could be more holy, and consequently more useful, at Oxford.

The next year the father died; the parish passed into the hands of strangers; the widow went to reside with her daughter Emily, at Gainsborough. Very soon after this event, providential circumstances—which mark a new era in their history—drew John and Charles from their coveted retirement at Oxford.

CHAPTER V.

A SEA-VOYAGE.

Mr. Wesley's father had been employed for many years in writing a commentary on the book of Job, but died as he was about to have it published. The work was brought out by his family, and Mr. Wesley took a copy of it to London and presented it with his own hands to the Queen. While he was in the city for this purpose, it was proposed to him that he should go to Georgia, (now one of the United States,) as chaplain to a colony which had been formed there under the superintendence of an Englishman named Oglethorpe, afterwards known by the title of General. Setting off at once for Epworth, he laid the subject before his mother. "Go, my son," was her noble reply. "If I had twenty sons, I should rejoice to see them so employed, though I never saw them again." His sister Emily, with whom his mother was about to find a home, added, "Go, brother;" and his brother Samuel added his cordial approval. Charles engaged to accompany John as secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe. Their object in going they declared to be to save their souls and live wholly for God. They

looked for greater holiness, because they were about to make greater sacrifices. They were about to try to draw nearer to God by increased mortifications of their natural feelings. They had not yet learned as fully as they afterwards did to take Christ as the way of holiness.

Wesley delighted, too, in the thought of preaching to the Indians. He supposed they would be more ready to receive the plain and full truths of gospel than were the people of England, who had sinned against great religious light.

The brothers embarked for America on the 14th of April, 1735. They were accompanied by two friends, who were going as teachers, Benjamin Ingham, of Oxford, and Charles Delamotte, son of a London merchant. They found already on board twenty-six Moravians,—a religious people from Germany,—who were going as missionaries to America, to join a company of their friends already there. Wesley commenced immediately the study of German, to be able to converse with these fellow-passengers. On the following Sabbath he preached upon the quarter-deck his first extemporaneous sermon, and administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

Wesley and his company made a systematic disposal of their time on shipboard. They were ready for the duties of the day at four o'clock in the morning. They occupied the first hour in private prayer. The next two hours they spent

together in a careful study of the Bible. They allowed one hour for breakfast and the following one for public prayer, and from nine to twelve o'clock they were engaged either in learning German or instructing the children of their fellow-passengers. The hour of noon was passed in accounting to each other for the faithful performance of this arrangement and in mutual admonition and counsel. The early part of the afternoon was devoted to labour for the irreligious. An hour of private prayer preceded the last meal, and the evening was occupied mostly in public worship; and the day was closed in a "class-meeting" for religious improvement.

The following anecdote is related in connection with the voyage. One day Mr. Wesley, hearing an unusual noise in the cabin of Mr. Oglethorpe, stepped in to inquire the cause of it, on which the general immediately addressed him:—"Mr. Wesley, you must excuse me; I have met with a provocation too great for man to bear. You know the only wine I drink is Cyprus wine, as it agrees with me the best of any. I therefore provided myself with several dozens of it, and this villain, Grimaldi," (his foreign servant, who was present, and almost dead with fear,) "has drunk up the whole of it. But I will be revenged of him. I have ordered him to be tied hand and foot, and to be carried to the man-of-war which sails with us. The rascal should have taken care how he used me so, for *I never forgive*." "Then I hope, sir,"

said Mr. Wesley, looking calmly at him, "*you never sin.*" The general was quite confounded at the reproof; and, putting his hand into his pocket, took out a bunch of keys, which he threw at Grimaldi, saying, "There, villain! take my keys, and behave better for the future."

Soon after they had entered the broad ocean, they encountered a succession of storms. Wesley, on one of these occasions of great danger, asked himself, "Am I prepared to die?" He started at the question, and trembled at the nearness of death. He was afraid to die. He was mortified and confounded at the discovery that all his self-denial and labour had produced no more satisfactory results. Passing from the confusion and dismay among the English passengers, he visited that part of the ship occupied by the Moravians. Among them there was no fear of the storm: men, women and children were cheerfully singing. Wesley asked, "Are you not afraid?" They answered, "No." "But are your women and children not afraid?" "No," was the mild reply; "our women and children are not afraid to die." These Moravians were strong in faith in Christ. Their hope lay in his grace, and not in their own zeal or merits.

On the 6th of February, 1736, the vessel anchored at a little green island in the Savannah River. Wesley and his friends ascended a beautiful rising ground, and, kneeling down, gave thanks to God, who had preserved them from the dangers of the ocean.

CHAPTER VI.

INCIDENTS OF TWO YEARS IN AMERICA.

WHILE waiting in the ship for preparations to land, Wesley was visited by one of the Moravian pastors of Savannah. They were soon engaged in religious conversation. Wesley asked the Moravians for their advice concerning his own conduct. "Have you assurance of your acceptance with God," inquired his counsellor. Wesley was confused, and knew not what to answer. "Do you know Christ?" he again inquired. "I know he is the Saviour of the world," was the reply. "True," added the Moravian; "but do you know he has saved you?" "I hope he has died to save me," answered Wesley. "Do you know yourself?" rejoined the other, sadly; to which was replied, "I do." "But," adds Wesley, at a later date, "I fear they were vain words." He had learned afterwards that he did not know himself.

On leaving the vessel, Mr. Charles Wesley accompanied Mr. Oglethorpe to Frederica, about one hundred miles south of Savannah, to officiate both as his secretary and as the minister of that place. John found a home, until his own house should be made ready, with the

Moravians. He was with them constantly, both in public and private, and observed them closely. He was deeply impressed with their love for one another, their happy frame of mind, their deep humility, and their ardent desire for the salvation of men. Unconsciously to himself, they were leading him to a knowledge of the simplicity of saving faith in Christ, and its holy fruits.

On the 7th of March, 1736, Wesley began his ministry in America. There being no opportunity of teaching the Indians, he ministered to the English and French population, performing at times the service in the language of the latter. At first he was flattered by a large attendance upon his preaching and the most fixed attention. But soon the people were offended. That severe discipline which Wesley had so unsparingly applied to himself he required of others. As he believed this to be necessary to salvation, he was consistent in so doing. He endeavoured to enforce all the rules of the church, though some of them had almost entirely gone out of use, even under the eye of the bishops in England. For the improvement of the serious, he united them in "classes" for mutual encouragement, and the most decidedly religious of these he divided into smaller "bands," for a stricter discipline in working out their salvation.

In all places, both in his own parish and the various towns where he preached, he attacked

openly the prevailing sins of the people. The profane, the Sabbath-breaker, the sordid money-seeker, and the trifling neglecter of serious things, were faithfully rebuked. He refused the sacrament to such persons as did not approach the Lord's table in the manner required by the rules of the church. He was no respecter of persons in the discharge of the duties of his office. The magistrate and private citizen, the rich and poor, were alike subjects of his faithful dealing. Unfortunately for the pastor and his people, while in all this conduct there was the soundest integrity, there was not the tender spirit of love. He sought honestly the good only of his people, but it was with more of the law than of the gospel.

While thus engaged for the adults, he did not forget his duty to the children. The teacher who taught the week-day school instructed the children in the catechism for a short season every day, under Mr. Wesley's directions. On every Saturday their minister met them for religious instruction, and a portion of the Sabbath was frequently devoted to the same purpose.

While John was thus employed at Savannah, Charles was labouring in the same spirit at Frederica. The opposition to him took the form of violent personal abuse. As secretary to the governor, he had expected to be provided with every thing required for his living, and therefore he brought no beds or furniture from

England. A report having been circulated that he had tried to induce the people to leave the colony, Governor Oglethorpe was greatly offended at him, and indulged his anger in the low revenge of removing from him all these necessary articles. He slept in a tent on the damp ground, and became seriously ill. All forsook him, or openly scoffed at him, except a few women, whose kind interference in nursing him probably saved his life. While thus low and poorly provided with means of comfort, his brother visited Frederica. A reconciliation with Oglethorpe was immediately effected, and Wesley's comforts and influence were restored.

In August, 1736, Charles was sent on a special message to England. Upon John now devolved a division of his ministerial services between Savannah and Frederica. In the latter place he pursued the same course as at the former, and with mainly the same effects. In his frequent journeys from place to place he passed safely through exposures which show the strength of his constitution and the value of the system of self-denial in which he had trained himself. One night he rolled in his sleep from the deck of the boat into the river, but swam back without any injury. At another time, with his friend Delamotte, he was lost in a cypress-swamp, through which they had to wade waist-deep, and, on reaching dry ground, spent the night in sleep, without fire or shelter. On a journey from Georgia to South Carolina,

with a small party, their path through the forest was lost for a whole day and night.

While Mr. Wesley was thus employed, an affair occurred in his history which, though at first it seemed likely to produce no remarkable results, was the final cause of his leaving America. Mr. Oglethorpe, the founder of the new colony, was an able and brave, but not a religious man. He highly respected the talents and independent bearing of Wesley, but he was not pleased with his strict religious habits. Wesley could not approve the exclusively worldly policy which he adopted in the management of the colony. The founder therefore devised or countenanced a cunning plan to cause him to think more of the world and less of religion.

There was in Savannah a young lady, of a respectable family, well educated, and of great personal attractions. She was introduced to Wesley by Oglethorpe as one who desired religious counsel; but the real object was to render herself so agreeable to Mr. Wesley that he would be induced to marry her, and fall under her worldly influence. The young lady employed the chaplain as her teacher in the French language, professed great interest in his religious instruction, and accommodated herself to what she saw was most agreeable to him. Wesley, not suspecting the deception, was well nigh betrayed into the unsuitable alliance. But the first hint that there was an

artful design alarmed him, and he consulted his friend, the bishop of the Moravians. The bishop told him that, while it was certainly not unlawful to marry, he ought to consider carefully whether the present was the time for him to marry, and whether the lady in question was a suitable person. Wesley referred the matter to the elders of the Moravian church, and promised to abide by their decision. They returned the answer, "We advise that you would proceed no further in this business."

From this time he discontinued his intimacy with the lady, whose subsequent conduct increased the evidence of her unfitness to be his wife. This lady having soon afterwards married, Mr. Wesley, as her pastor, had occasion to reprove her for conduct inconsistent with her Christian profession. He carried this so far as to forbid her coming to the Lord's supper. This gave rise to a difficulty with her family, who attempted to bring the clergyman before a civil court to answer for his actions. After much trouble, Mr. Wesley resolved to return to England; and, as it was the chief object of his enemies to drive him away, they dropped the prosecution.

On the 22d of December, 1737, Mr. Wesley left America, having laboured there one year and about nine months.

CHAPTER VII.

A NEW ERA.

On his way home to England, Wesley employed his time on board the ship as he did during the voyage to America. His food was of the plainest kind. He laboured faithfully with the unconverted, and endeavoured to instruct and prompt to greater diligence those who were striving to live a godly life. While thus solicitous for others, he was far from being satisfied with his own state of heart. A violent tempest again led him to inquire, "Am I now ready to die?" He looked within, and he had no peace; all his works had not brought an assurance that he was God's child. In the bitterness of his feelings he exclaimed, "I have been to America to convert the Indians; but who shall convert me? Who shall deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? Oh, who will deliver me from this fear of death? What shall I do? Where shall I flee from it? * * * It is now more than two years since I went to America, in order to teach the Indians of Georgia the nature of Christianity; and what have I learned in the mean time? Why, (what I

least of all suspected,) that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. 'I am not mad,' though I thus speak; but I speak 'the words of truth and soberness,' if haply some of those who still dream may awake and see that as I am so are they. Are they read in philosophy? so was I. In ancient or modern tongues? so was I also. Are they versed in the science of divinity? I too have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon spiritual things? the very same could I do. Are they plenteous in alms? Behold, I gave all my goods to feed the poor. Do they give of their labour as well as their substance? 'I have laboured more abundantly than they all.' Are they willing to suffer for their brethren? I have thrown up my reputation, friends, ease, country; I have put my life in my hand, wandering into a strange land; I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat, consumed by toil and weariness, and whatsoever God shall please to bring upon me. But does all this make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did, or can know, do, say, or suffer, justify me in his sight? Yea, on the constant use of all the means of grace, (which nevertheless is meet, right, and our bounden duty,) does all this give me a claim to the holy, heavenly, divine character of a Christian? By no means. * * * All these things, when ennobled by faith in

Christ, are holy and just and good, yet without it are dung and dross."

In this spirit of dissatisfaction with himself, he landed in England. He continued, notwithstanding, to preach, to deny himself, to converse with others concerning their souls, and, by all possible means, striving to save some, "hoping," he says, "that he also might be saved, he hardly knew how."

The following record from his journal will show his continued self-discipline:—

"With regard to my own behaviour, I now reviewed and wrote down my former resolutions. (1.) To use absolute openness and unreserve with all I should converse with. (2.) To labour after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging myself in any the least levity of behaviour, or in laughter; no, not for a moment. (3.) To speak no word which does not tend to the glory of God; in particular, not to speak of worldly things. Others may,—nay, must; but what is that to thee? (4.) To take pleasure in nothing which does not tend to the glory of God; thanking God every moment for all I do take, therefore rejecting every sort and degree of it which I feel I cannot so thank him *in* and *for*."

Soon after his arrival he met at London, at the house of a Dutch merchant, a Moravian missionary, named Peter Bohler, lately from Germany, and on his way with others to America. From him Wesley began to learn not

only what he lacked in order to become a child of God, but—that which he most needed to know — how to supply that deficiency. Bohler insisted that he must renounce all trust in his works, and come at once, by faith alone, to Christ. He dwelt upon the assurance and peace which were wrought in the heart through the Holy Ghost by faith. But that which astonished Wesley most, and which he for some time opposed, was Bohler's declaration that the soul, when broken with deep penitence for sin, might, by faith, receive immediate pardon and peace. He opposed it by his philosophy. But Bohler replied, "My brother, my brother! that philosophy of your's must be purged away." Wesley now took his Greek Testament and began anew to read it, to learn its teaching concerning the immediate fruit of the Spirit through faith. The examination resulted in a more painful sense than ever of his own wretched condition. He thus records his feelings:—

"I know that every thought and temper of my soul ought to bear God's image and superscription. But how am I fallen from the glory of God! I feel that I am sold under sin. I know that I deserve nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations, and having no good thing in me to atone for them or to remove the anger of God. All my works, all my righteousness, all my prayers, need an atonement for themselves; so that my mouth

is stopped. 'God is a consuming fire.' I am altogether a sinner, meet to be consumed."

In his anxious inquiries after light, the doctrine of the Moravian—that salvation is the gift of God through faith—he found confirmed, where he least expected, in the sermons published by the authority of his own church. These he had doubtless read before, but with different feelings. His patient teacher brought several humble believers, who testified that they had an assurance that they had peace in believing. He says, "They added, with one mouth, that this faith was the gift—the free gift—of God. I was now thoroughly convinced, and by the grace of God I was determined to seek it unto the end:—1. By renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon my own works or righteousness, on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation (though I knew it not) from my youth up. 2. By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace, continual prayer for this very thing,—justifying, saving faith; a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for me; a trust in him as *my* Christ, as my sole justification, sanctification, and redemption."

Being thoroughly convinced of his own lack of saving faith, Wesley queried whether he ought to preach any more until he received it. But Bohler told him he must preach faith

until he had it, and then he would preach it because he had it.

Charles Wesley was at this time in London, seriously ill. During his interviews with him, John plainly declared his new convictions concerning the way of salvation. Charles was at first displeased; but the more the brothers conversed, and the more diligently they studied the Scriptures, the more perfectly the clouds withdrew from their minds, and they saw and felt the force of that divine word, "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Charles, though suffering great pain of body, suffered still more in mind, from a sense of unforgiven sin. He expressed his longing after Christ in the following hymn:—

The blessing of thy love bestow;
For this my cries shall never fail;
Wrestling, I will not let thee go,—
I will not, till my suit prevail.

I'll weary thee with my complaint;
Here at thy feet forever lie,
With longing sick, with groaning faint,
Oh, give me love, or else I die.

Without this best, divinest grace,
'Tis death, 'tis worse than death, to live;
'Tis hell to want thy blissful face,
And saints in thee their heaven receive.

Come, then, my hope, my life, my Lord,
And fix in me thy lasting home!
Be mindful of thy gracious word:
Thou, with thy promised Father, come.

Near the last of May, 1738, the brothers, within a few days of the same time, both indulged a hope in Christ. They held him with a trembling hand. Charles thus expresses his feelings in view of this change:—"My temper was mistrust of my own great and before unknown weakness. I saw that by faith I stood; and the continual support of faith, which kept me from falling, though of myself I am ever sinking into sin. I went to bed, still sensible of my own weakness, (I humbly hope to be more and more so,) yet confident of Christ's protection."

John records, as the immediate fruit of his hope of acceptance with Christ, a love for all who had despitefully used him. He began to feel a peace of mind which he had never felt before; yet he had no strong emotions of joy. He was much buffeted by temptations; but resorted to prayer, and they were resisted. He adds, "I found all my strength lay in keeping my eye fixed upon Christ and my soul waiting on him continually;" and, "I was taught that peace and victory over sin are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation; but as to the transports of joy which usually attend the beginning of it, especially in those who have mourned deeply, God sometimes giveth and sometimes withholdeth them, according to the counsels of his own will."

On the occasion of John Wesley's indulging a hope in Christ, his brother Charles ad-

dressed him in a hymn of congratulation, from which we select the following stanza:—

Bless'd be the Name that sets thee free,—
The Name that sure salvation brings!
The Sun of righteousness on thee
Hath ris'n, with healing in his wings.
Away let grief and sighing flee;
Jesus hath died for thee—for thee.

And, the first time they met after the happy change, they sang together, in the language of Charles,—

Oh, how shall I the goodness tell,
Father, which thou to me hast show'd?
That I, a child of wrath and hell,
Should e'er be called a child of God.

* * * * * *

Long my imprison'd spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thy eye diffused a quickening ray;
I woke; the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and follow'd thee.

The events we have just been describing in the experience of John and Charles Wesley constituted indeed a new era in their experience. From the time they were awakened to a concern for their personal salvation at Oxford, about twelve years before, we have seen them earnest but unsuccessful seekers of justification by their own works. Surely, if any could ever find pardon and holiness by such

means, they would have found them. What toil and self-denial and cross-bearing did they not endure! But they only the more fully learned that they were "carnal and sold under sin." The comfortless result of every effort caused each of them to cry out in bitterness of spirit, "Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

CHAPTER VIII.

INCIDENTS OF A TOUR IN GERMANY.

THERE was in London an excellent family with whom the two Wesleys had resided on the most friendly terms when they were in the city. This family were familiar acquaintances also of their brother, the Rev. Samuel Wesley. Here they declared with the utmost frankness what God had done for their souls, strongly asserting that up to a very recent period they had not known the inward work of religion.

At this these friends were greatly offended. They opposed their doctrine and experience with great warmth. They had a son, a young printer, who sympathized with the sentiments of the Wesleys. The parents regarded their son as on the verge of spiritual ruin. In their distress they wrote a highly-wrought account of the fanaticism of John and Charles Wesley to their brother Samuel Wesley, appealing to his sympathies as distressed parents, in behalf of their endangered son. Samuel's feelings were aroused against both the doctrine and the conduct as it was represented of his brothers. A long controversy ensued, mostly with John, in opposition to salvation by faith alone, and as-

surance of acceptance with God. At the same time, the much-honoured widowed mother received with much distrust this new view of the Christian life. Samuel died soon after, with much modified sentiments and a ripened Christian experience, and the mother became a cordial co-labourer, in her declining years, in the reformation in which John and Charles were engaged.

While John was feeling the commencement of this dissent from his relatives, some of his religious teachers at Oxford began to press him with distracting sentiments. His religious life had begun with much alternation of hope and fear. He had peace, but not great joy, and he was in frequent heaviness through manifold temptations. He was weak in faith. But these teachers told him that weak faith was no faith at all; and he that had any doubts and fears was not a Christian. This was the beginning of the development of a great error, which brought much injury to the cause of God. It was the abuse of the doctrine of faith, by which it was not made to include, according to the teaching of the apostle James, good works as its proper fruit. During this time Wesley was meeting weekly with a society in Fetter Lane, formed under the direction of Peter Bohler. This society had many of the peculiar regulations of the future Methodist societies. It had its classes and bands, its probation for admittance, its strictness of discipline, and the

same professed end,—the holiness of its members. But, notwithstanding the assistance Wesley received from this society, the opposition from the influences we have stated greatly disturbed his peace of mind. He felt that he needed to withdraw from the scene of contest until his own heart should be more fully established by divine grace. He had become interested in the Moravians from Germany from the time he first met their missionaries on his voyage to America, and this interest had been much increased by the spiritual instruction given him by Peter Bohler. He therefore determined to visit them in Germany. He left England on the 14th of June, 1738, and the next day landed at Rotterdam, in Holland. He was accompanied by five Englishmen and three Germans. They took the course of the Rhine, towards Cleves, on the borders of Prussia. They travelled mostly on foot, sometimes resting by a sail in the boats. Wesley was a great admirer of nature and works of art. He entered the old Gothic churches of the ancient towns on his route, admiring their historic paintings and impressive architecture. He was hospitably entertained on the first Sabbath, at Ysselstein, by a German baron. In the morning Wesley administered the Lord's supper to the English residents and others, and spent the remainder of the day with a little band of English and Moravians, who had taken up their residence in a few humble houses in the outskirts

of the town. He says, "We employed our time in hearing the wonderful work which God is beginning to work over all the earth, and in making our request known unto him, and in giving thanks for the mightiness of his kingdom." He passed through Amsterdam, paused for a night at Cologne, and on arriving at Frankfort he was cordially entertained by the father of his valued friend, Peter Bohler. A short distance from Frankfort is Marienborn. Here he found Zinzendorf, a German baron, who had received and protected the Moravians when they had fled from the persecutions of their own country, Moravia. He was a nobleman of great talents and some eccentricities. From his youth his religious feelings were very strong, from the education of his pious grandmother, and were afterwards deepened by the influence of his teacher, the celebrated Professor Franke, of Halle. On becoming acquainted with the Moravians, he adopted their religious doctrines and mode of worship, and became a preacher and finally a bishop among them. There was a family of ninety of these Christians living in a house at Marienborn, which he had provided for them. Here Wesley tarried two weeks, greatly edified by their conversation, simplicity of Christian character, and especially by their cordial love for one another.

In his further travels in Germany he was greatly annoyed by the police-regulations. At

one time, after being detained at the gate of the city a long time, he was conducted from one magistrate to another, with many impertinent questions, and was at last brought before the Prince Royal in the public square. The prince asked him, among many other questions, where he was going. "To Hernhuth," was the reply.

"For what purpose," he again inquired.

"To see the place where the Christians live," answered Wesley. The royal personage looked sternly at him, as if doubting whether any person would go so far for such a purpose, and let him proceed. This prince was afterwards the celebrated Frederick the Great, King of Prussia.

On Tuesday, August 1, after a journey, mostly on foot, of a month and a half, through important portions of Germany, he arrived at Hernhuth, about thirty miles from Dresden. Here was the principal settlement of the Moravians. It contained about one hundred houses, situated on a rising ground surrounded in part by evergreen woods and in part by well-cultivated fields and gardens. In the background were hills commanding a beautiful view of the vicinity. Directly through the village the highroad from Zittan to Lobau passed. The buildings were constructed and arranged in reference to economy, neatness and convenience. There was a commodious house set apart for strangers, in which Wesley

and his companions were cordially entertained. The regulations of this truly pious people were very peculiar. But it was not their forms, but their Christian doctrines and character, which Wesley came to study. Their Christian enterprise was in the spirit of the apostles. They commenced their settlement at Hernhuth a few years before Wesley's visit, and in fifty years their missionaries had lifted up the standard of the cross among the snows of Greenland and on the burning sands of Africa; they had preached Christ on the banks of the Ganges and beside the waters of our own Ohio; they had seen sinners converted in the extreme portions of South America and in the comfortless regions of Siberia. Their spirit at home well agreed with their zeal abroad. They were united, devout, and abounding in good works. Mr. Wesley heard several of their distinguished preachers, and spent much of his time in hearing from the lips of the most deeply pious a recital of their Christian experience. From the sermons, he was confirmed in his recently-adopted belief of salvation by faith alone, as the gift of God through Christ; and from their experience (which agreed so well with the work which he had trusted God had recently wrought in his own heart) he was greatly strengthened. He also received many suggestions from their society-regulations, which, though he could have had no such pur

pose at the time, he made use of afterwards in organizing his own people.

Being thus confirmed and made joyful in believing, he writes, "I would gladly have spent my life here; but, my Master calling me to labour in another part of his vineyard, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy place. Oh, when shall this Christianity 'cover the earth as the waters cover the sea!' I was exceedingly comforted and strengthened by the conversation of this lovely people, and returned to England more fully determined to spend my life in testifying the gospel of the grace of God."

He returned to England as he came, generally travelling on foot, stopping only at Halle, to visit Professor Francke; one day at the University of Jena, and three days in the family of Count Zinzendorf, at Marienborn. He arrived in London the 17th of September, after an absence of three months.

While John was in Germany, Charles Wesley was preaching faith in Christ as the only way of salvation. Though sometimes in darkness, he generally had peace and joy in believing. His ardent temperament and zealous love for souls allowed him no rest. Though at times suffering acute pain from pleurisy, he recommended the love of the Saviour from the pulpit and at the fireside on every possible occasion; he exhorted sinners to come to Christ; he

spread the fervour of his spirit of love to God over every circle in which he moved.

After an absence of three months, the brothers met in London on the evening of September 16. During the day Charles had been at the Newgate prison, trying to comfort, with the offers of salvation, four convicted felons who were soon to suffer the penalty of death. During the evening they compared their experiences. Charles had seen the commencement of a great work of God in and about London; and John had seen an exhibition of the power of simple faith in Germany. Their brotherly affection was increased, and they encouraged each other to renewed labour for the salvation of men.

CHAPTER IX.

FIELD-PREACHING.

In an important sense we may consider the Wesleys as just commencing their career as reformers. Their previous experience had been preparatory to the great labour of their lives. John Wesley was now thirty-five years of age, and Charles thirty. They were yet comparatively obscure individuals. Every step they advanced clearly shows that they had no thought of what God would do by their instrumentality.

Just at this point we must introduce more particularly a valued co-labourer,— George Whitefield. At this period they were of one heart and one work. About three years before, Whitefield was toiling in much poverty through his college course at Oxford. To pay his expenses, he had consented to receive assistance from the charity fund of the college; and, to meet the deficiency, had taken the humble position of a waiter upon the students. The Wesleys were still residing at Oxford, though his seniors in age and education. They had attained the distinction of "Methodist" and leaders of the "Holy Club."

Whitefield had known their fame, and inwardly longed to be admitted to their fellowship; for his heart God had touched by his Spirit, and he was asking, "What shall I do to be saved?" His diffidence and humble position deterred him from introducing himself to them; but God opened his way to their society and confidence. A poor man had attempted to commit suicide; and Whitefield, knowing that the Wesleys were ever ready to assist the suffering, requested an apple-woman to inform them of his case, but charged her not to mention his own name; but the woman, with great simplicity, told Charles Wesley that George Whitefield had sent her with information concerning a suffering pauper. This led to a friendship, which, though disturbed by the controversies of after-years, continued strong through life. Whitefield had followed the Wesleys in their labours in America, with much better success; and had returned to anticipate them a little in receiving and preaching faith in Christ. Having received ordination at the hands of the excellent Bishop Benson, he commenced his wonderful ministry by preaching in his native place, Gloucester. He was but twenty-one years of age. He had been known as the boy of the village inn, for his widowed mother had been its proprietor from his childhood. Old and young flocked to hear him. They remembered not only his former poverty and obscurity, but his stirring school-declamations, by which the elo-

quence of the preacher had been foreshadowed. He preached with the power of an astonishing elocution and with the grace of an attractive manner; but these were not the greatest elements of his strength. He was clothed with divine unction. God had spoken to and melted his own heart. As he brought his sermon to a close, he exclaimed, "I would willingly go to prison and death for you, could I but bring one soul to Jesus Christ. Come, then, to Christ; every one that hears me, come. For your immortal soul's sake, *come!*" and his startling tones fell with amazing power upon his hearers. In the excitement which his sermon produced he was accused to the bishop of driving fifteen people mad.

Such was Whitefield, as he stood forth as not the least remarkable of this remarkable trio of chosen instruments to arouse a slumbering nation. England was indeed more than in a spiritual slumber. The houses of worship were thinly attended. The ordinances were neglected and despised. The desecration of the Sabbath was almost universal, by both ministers and people. The mass of the people could well say, "No man careth for my soul." Here and there a faithful sentinel lifted up a warning voice. A seed of faithful disciples were left, among whom the ruling spirits of the parsonage at Epworth might be cited as an example. This long-unnoticed seed was to spring forth with vigour.

A very few sermons in the pulpit from the Wesleys and Whitefield sufficed, and they were everywhere told, "You must come here no more." They were too much in earnest, and the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, however tenderly preached, contained too much of reproof, for the rich and the aristocratical, many of whom, being already the friends and defenders of the Established church, esteemed themselves righteous. "But the common people heard them gladly." A frequent reason given for closing the doors of the churches against them was that such crowds pressed into the church that the customary occupants were greatly incommoded. The ministers alleged, with reason, that the attendance upon the Lord's supper was so increased when they came that their labour was doubled. Finding themselves generally thus debarred from the churches, these reformers confined themselves for a short time to a peculiar sphere of labour. There had been in England, for many years, "societies," or meetings, in which the word of God was read and explained, religious exhortations given, and regular collections taken for the poor. The members were pledged to use the more public means of grace, especially the Lord's supper, and to aim at attaining a holy life. They were countenanced by the authorities of the church, and attendance upon them therefore was considered in no wise disorderly. It was at one of these societies, as

the reader will recollect, meeting at Aldersgate, in London, that John Wesley was so greatly awakened.

In some of these the three co-labourers met almost daily, expounding the word and continuing instant in singing and prayer. Portions of their time were spent in the prisons and in following the condemned criminals to the foot of the gallows with the pressing offers of the mercy of God through Christ.

Whitefield's zealous spirit was the first to go beyond this narrow though useful sphere. He says that while preaching one Sunday at Bermondsey Church, "with great freedom in his heart and clearness in his voice," there were a thousand people standing in the churchyard, to catch, if possible, the sound of his voice, and many went away unable to receive any of his instructions. "This," he adds, "put me first upon thinking of preaching without-doors. I mentioned it to some friends, who looked upon it as a mad notion." Such were his feelings when on January 1, 1739, he met in a "love-feast" at Fetter-lane with John and Charles Wesley, Mr. Ingham, the old fellow-traveller of the Wesleys, and about sixty others. "About three o'clock in the morning," says Mr. Wesley, "as we were continuing instant at prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amaze-

ment at the presence of his majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.'" "It was a pentecostal season indeed!" exclaimed Whitefield, as he went forth from this memorable watch-night to preach Christ at Bristol. Near this city was a tract of country called Kingswood. It had been the king's hunting-ground; but the deer had long since disappeared, and portions of the ground were improved and occupied. Coal-mines had been discovered, and in them at this period great numbers of men were employed. The people of the whole district spoke a peculiar dialect, and were notoriously ignorant and wicked. There was no church among them; and, if they had been disposed to walk between three and four miles to the nearest parish, they would have found neither room nor welcome. For these sheep of the wilderness without a shepherd Whitefield's religious sympathies were excited. On Saturday, February 17, 1739, he ascended a rising ground, and, lifting up his clear and musical voice, bade the people hear the word of God. No previous notice had been given; but a few hundreds were attracted by this unprecedented occurrence. When he returned to Bristol, his superiors in the church reproved him for this, as they thought, disorderly proceeding. He pleaded in his defence the example of Christ, the perishing condition of the souls at Kingswood, and the fact that the pul-

pits were shut against him. He was told he must not continue this field-preaching. But, believing that God approved it, he went to Moorfields again, and preached to two thousand, which number, after a few visits, increased to twenty thousand. Multitudes of the rich and poor from Bristol mingled with the blackened colliers. To the poor miners his appearance and his message were alike astonishing. He had come to be their preacher, and had proclaimed to them divine truths which had all the freshness of a new revelation from heaven. They were at first interested by the novelty of his preaching, then melted and made penitent by its divine power, and many hundreds became finally true Christians.

Leaving Whitefield amid the inspiring scenes of Kingswood, let us turn to his friends in London. Great excitement had been produced by the preaching of the Wesleys. Many unfavourable rumors were circulated concerning them; among other complaints, the bishop was told that they "preached an absolute assurance of salvation." "We waited upon him," says Charles Wesley, "to answer the complaints he had heard against us." In the course of their conversation the bishop remarked, "If by assurance you mean an inward persuasion, whereby a man is conscious in himself, after examining his life by the law of God and weighing his own sincerity, that he is in a state of salvation and accepted of God, I do not see how any

good Christian can be without such an assurance." "This," replied the Wesleys, "is what we contend for." They then expressed a hope that his lordship would not henceforth receive an accusation against a presbyter but at the mouth of two or three witnesses. The bishop replied, "No, by no means; and you may have free access to me at all times."

Soon after they waited upon the archbishop, who, says Charles, "showed us great affection; spoke mildly of Mr. Whitefield; cautioned us to give no more umbrage than was necessary for our own defence, to forbear exceptionable phrases, to keep to the doctrines of the church, and assured us of his joy to see us as often as we pleased." But the clergy in less authority did not generally treat them so courteously. Charles Wesley had held a situation for a short time as an assistant to the minister of the church at Islington, by a private arrangement, the bishop's consent not having been obtained. The church-wardens, not liking either his doctrines of salvation by faith nor the annoyance of the crowds which his preaching attracted, determined to take advantage of his want of the bishop's consent to be an assistant in the church to keep him away. Meeting him in the vestry, they demanded a sight of the bishop's license, which they knew he did not possess. He made but little reply, and proceeded to his duties. On his next visit they proceeded to insulting accusations. They next

employed a man to push him from the pulpit-stairs should he attempt to ascend. Their servant not performing his wicked task with sufficient promptness, the church-wardens themselves drove him from the place in the presence of the congregation. The church and the civil authorities countenanced the outrage, and Wesley retired from his relation to the parish to seek other fields of labour.

Whitefield, having fairly embarked on his mission of offering salvation in the highways and hedges, began to make arrangements to return to America. He had begun there a noble charity, called the Orphan-House. He had assumed a heavy pecuniary responsibility in its behalf, and he therefore everywhere laid its claims before the people to whom he preached. But how could he leave the people of Kingswood? He naturally turned to his friends, the Wesleys. They were at London. Charles had just returned from his rude repulse at Islington. John was expounding in the societies, visiting the abodes of poverty, and offering Christ to the inmates of the prisons. Such was the position of the three friends when Whitefield wrote to John Wesley to hasten to Bristol. The proposition was laid before the society at Fetter-lane. All were greatly perplexed. The brethren were divided in opinion, and disputed earnestly over the question. While the company were thus debating, Wesley had decided concerning the course of

duty, and started for the new and ever-memorable battle field. The following Sabbath he listened to Whitefield's solemn appeals in the field. His prejudices against such a course were very strong. He says, "I could at first scarce reconcile myself to this strange way of preaching in the fields of which he set me an example on Sunday; having been all my life, till very lately, so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church. In the evening, (April 1, 1739,) Mr. Whitefield being gone, I began expounding our Lord's Sermon on the Mount to a little society that was accustomed to meet once or twice a week in Nicholas Street. At four in the afternoon of the following day I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking, from a little eminence in a ground adjoining the city, to about three thousand people. The Scripture on which I spake was this:—'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.'" On the following Sabbath he was proclaiming the word of life at Rosegreen, Kingswood, to five thousand people. For several successive weeks,

multitudes gathered around the hill-tops and thronged the valleys, to hear from his lips the words of divine truth.

But we must not part with Whitefield from this place, where God had so greatly honoured him, without another hasty interview. When he had introduced Wesley to this self-denying labour, he had exclaimed, "Help him, Lord Jesus, to water what thy own right hand hath planted, for thy mercy's sake!" As he passed through Kingswood, to embark for America, many crowded around him, weeping, as for the departure of a beloved parent. They clung to him with unaffected fondness. Of their poverty they contributed freely to his Orphan-House in Georgia. At one place, to his surprise, he found an entertainment prepared for him. And these were the recently profane, wholly irreligious, and uncared-for colliers! Now, with a peace and joy they never conceived before, they go forth to meet the minister as the cause, under God, of their translation from darkness to light! They proposed to show their gratitude by contributing towards a charity-school for their own children. Religion had prompted a desire for knowledge. But many of them were too old, now, to learn much besides what was immediately necessary in order to be saved. They would have their children begin to lay a broader and deeper foundation for the service of God. Whitefield preached to them a sermon on the subject, and

laid a stone at random, as the beginning of the enterprise,—for the site was not yet selected. Thus honoured and rejoicing, he hastened to London. On his way, he tarried a short time at his native town, Gloucester, and was permitted to occupy the pulpit. The grateful recollections of the past gave a gushing emotion to his religious feelings. He broke away from the prescribed forms of the service, and poured forth his whole soul in a torrent of irresistible eloquence. The people were subdued under its power. But those in authority said, "This is disorder; and you must preach here no more." He next paused in his journey at Oxford; but many spake bitter things against him. The "offence of the cross" had not ceased at this seat of learning. We next find him at Islington, where Charles Wesley had been driven from the pulpit by the churchwardens. The minister invited Whitefield to preach; but his wardens, having been sustained in their previous course by higher authority, posted themselves at the pulpit-stairs to guard it against his approach. After the reading of the prayers at the desk, Whitefield, seeing the threatened war, quietly retired to the churchyard, the whole congregation following him, and preached without interruption from a tombstone.

Thus annoyed in, or shut from the pulpits, and emboldened by the success God had given him at Kingswood, he determined to resort to

the fields and commons in London and vicinity. There was near this city a tract of country called Moorfields. It was, at an earlier period, an impassable marsh; but, by draining, had been improved as gardens, in part, and brick-kilns, and was at this time given up as a ground of public and almost lawless amusement. Here congregated wrestlers, boxers, the idle and dissolute. Preaching at Moorfields was what Whitefield esteemed an attack upon the citadel of the devil; and attacking the strongholds suited his bold spirit better than skirmishing. His friends expressed many fears for his safety; but to Moorfields he set forth. It was Sunday, and the immense throng were under a little more restraint than on a week-day. Notice had been given of his intention, and the rush towards him was so great that he was separated from the friends who accompanied him, and the table for his stand—which they were attempting to carry—was thrown to the ground, broken and trampled under feet. Whitefield boldly pressed forward and gained a wall which divided the ground. From this he poured forth his earnest words. The turbulent multitudes became still. Of the twenty thousand human beings within the sound of his voice not one reproached or opposed him.

In the afternoon of the same day he preached on Kennington Common to the fashionable, the gay, the pleasure-seeking

crowds which ever throng this popular park. He took his stand also, at times, in Blackheath, another public place of promenade. But Moorfields was his favourite pulpit. At one time he proclaimed the word of life from its wall to thirty thousand people. In all these congregations collections were taken for his Orphan-House. At one time $300 in amount was contributed, $100 of which was in halfpence, making a weight greater than one man could carry.

From these exciting and glorious scenes of the triumphs of God's work, he embarked for Georgia, in mid-summer, (August, 1739,) consigning the care of Kingswood, Moorfields, Kennington Common, and Blackheath, to his bosom friends, John and Charles Wesley.

Having fully introduced two of our Christian heroes to the reader as field-preachers, let us turn for a moment to Charles Wesley. Soon after his exclusion from Islington, he had been dismissed with anger from the presence of the Primate of England, forbidden the pulpit of a beloved friend, and had been in great "heaviness" through these many conflicts. Having gone to a small village, forty miles from London, to visit a sister, such numbers pressed into the church when he preached, that he was invited by a farmer to occupy his field. This he did, stimulated by the example of his brother and of Whitefield. On returning to London, he ventured at once into

the midst of the masses of Moorfields, Kennington Common, and Blackheath.

The work of field-preaching being now fairly begun, the prejudices of the Wesleys against so daring an innovation upon established rule yielded to the evident sanction of God.

CHAPTER X.

SOME OF THE IMMEDIATE EFFECTS OF FIELD-PREACHING.

In the summer of 1739, the Wesleys exchanged fields of labour,—John returning to London, and his brother taking charge of the work at Bristol. Charles, on his way to the latter place, preached in the principal towns on his road,—generally in the highways, but always first requesting the privilege of occupying the pulpit. To one such application quite a curt message was returned, and somewhat illustrative of the character of many of the clergyman of the times. "I should be glad," said the minister, "to have Mr. Wesley call and drink a glass of wine with me, but I durst not lend him my pulpit for fifty guineas."

"Mr. Whitefield" (a brother to George Whitefield) "durst lend me his field," adds Wesley, "which did just as well; for an hour and a half God gave me a voice and strength to exhort about two thousand sinners to repent and believe the gospel."

Charles Wesley's appearance and labours at Bristol at this period are thus described by an

eminent dissenting clergyman of Kidderminster. It is extracted from a letter published at the time in the "Gentleman's Magazine:"—

"Hearing that Mr. Charles Wesley would preach in the afternoon, just out of the city, I got a guide and went to hear him. I found him standing upon a table in an erect posture, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven in prayer, surrounded with, I guess, more than a thousand people; some few of them persons of fashion, both men and women, but the most of them of the lower rank of mankind. I know not how long he had been engaged in the duty before I came, but he continued therein after my coming scarcely a quarter of an hour; during which time he prayed with uncommon fervency, fluency, and variety of proper expression. He then preached about an hour from 2 Cor. v. 17–21—'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,' etc.—in such a manner as I have seldom, if ever, heard any minister preach; that is, though I have heard many a finer sermon, according to the common taste, yet I have scarcely ever heard any minister discover such evident signs of a most vehement desire, or labour so earnestly to convince his hearers that they were all by nature in a state of enmity against God, consequently, in a damnable state, and needed reconciliation with God; that God is willing to be reconciled to all, even the worst of sinners, and for that end hath laid all our sin on

Christ, and Christ hath borne the punishment due to our sins in our nature and stead. * * * These points he supported all along as he went on with many texts of Scripture, which he illustrated and explained, and then freely invited all, even the chief of sinners, and used a great variety of the most moving arguments and expostulations, in order to persuade, allure, instigate, and, if possible, *compel* all to come to Christ and believe in him for pardon and salvation. Nor did he fail to inform them thoroughly how ineffectual their faith would be to justify them in the sight of God unless it wrought by love, purified their hearts, and reformed their lives; for, though he cautioned them with the utmost care not to attribute any merit to their own performances, nor in the least to rest upon any works of their own, yet, at the same time, he apprised them that their faith is but a dead faith if it be not operative and productive of good works, even all the good in their power.

"Afterwards I went with Mr. Wesley to a religious society which met in the evening. I found the place so thronged that it was with very great difficulty we got to the centre of it, where was a convenient place provided for him either to stand or sit. When we came to the place they were singing a hymn, but ceased on Mr. Wesley's mounting the rostrum. He first prayed; then expounded a part of St. John's Gospel; then sung a hymn; then proceeded

awhile with the exposition; then, after again singing, prayed over more than twenty written requests, which were sent to him by the society, respecting their spiritual concerns, and concluded with the usual benediction. Never did I hear such praying or such singing—never did I see and hear such evident marks of fervency of spirit in the service of God—as in that society. At the close of every single petition a serious Amen—like the rushing sound of waters—ran through the whole society; and their singing was not only the most harmonious and delightful I ever heard, but, as Whitefield writes in his journal, 'they sang lustily and with good courage.' I never so well understood that expression before. Indeed, they seemed to sing with melody in their hearts. If there be any such thing as heavenly music on earth, I heard it there. As for my own part, I do not remember my heart to have been so elevated in prayer and praise, either in collegiate, parochial, or private worship, as it was there and then."

During this year (1739) a place of worship was built in Bristol for these scattered sheep, under the direction of John Wesley. As it was the first chapel erected under his influence, we present the reader with the circumstances by which he was led to this kind of labour, which subsequently constituted so large a part of his public duty. He says:—"We took possession of a piece of ground near St. James's

Churchyard, in the Horse-fair, where it was designed to build a room large enough to contain both the societies of Nicolas and Baldwin Streets, and such of their friends as might desire to be present with them at such times as the Scriptures were expounded. The first stone was laid with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.

"I had not at first the least apprehension or design to be personally engaged either in the expense of this work or the direction of it; having appointed eleven trustees, on whom I supposed these burdens would fall of course. But I quickly found my mistake: first, with regard to the expense; for the whole undertaking must have stood still, had I not immediately taken upon myself the payment of all the workmen, so that, before I knew where I was, I had contracted a debt of more than seven hundred and fifty dollars. And this I was to discharge how I could, the subscriptions of both societies not amounting to one-quarter of that sum. As to the direction of the work, I presently received letters from my friends in London, Mr. Whitefield in particular, backed by a message of a person just come from thence, 'that neither he nor they would have any thing to do with the building, neither contribute any thing towards it, unless I would instantly discharge all trustees and do every thing in my own name.' Many reasons they gave for this, but one was enough,—viz: 'That such trustees

would always have it in their power to control me, and, if I preached not as they liked, to turn me out of the room I had built.' I accordingly yielded to their advice, and, calling all the trustees together, cancelled (no man opposing) the instrument made before, and took the whole management into my own hands. Money, it is true, I had not, nor any human prospect of obtaining it. But I knew 'the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof,' and in his name set out, nothing doubting."

Towards the close of the same year he makes the following record concerning the school for the Kingswood children, in reference to a building for which Whitefield had preached in the spring and laid a stone at random, in full confidence that the enterprise would be completed:—

"That the children of these converts might know the things which make for their peace, it was some time since proposed to build a house in Kingswood; and, after many unforeseen difficulties, in June last the foundation was laid. The ground made choice of was in the middle of the wood between the London and Bath Roads, not far from that called Two-Mile Hill, three miles from Bristol. Here a large room was begun for the school, having four small rooms at either end, for the schoolmaster, and perhaps, if it should please God, serve poor children to lodge in. Two persons are ready to teach so soon as the house is fit to receive

them, the shell of which is nearly finished; so that it is hoped the whole will be completed in the spring or early in the summer. It is true, although the masters require no pay, yet this undertaking is attended with great expense. But let Him that feedeth the young ravens see to that."

The providence of God did watch over this noble work of instructing ignorant children. The house was completed, and from this school grew one of the most prominent seminaries of the Wesleyan connection, which continues to the present day.

Here then was a church and a school-house as a part of the immediate fruit of the field-preaching of these faithful men. The following incident connected with Charles Wesley's preaching at this period in Kingswood will illustrate the strong hold that his labours had given him upon the affections of the rude and but recently wicked colliers. He had just recovered from a prostrating sickness brought on by his intense exertions for their good. He gives the following account of an incident which occurred while he was riding out one morning:—"At the end of the town I was told the colliers were risen, [that is, in a mob or riot.] Above a thousand of them I met at Laurence Hill. They came about me and saluted me very affectionately, not having seen me since my illness. The occasion of their rising, they told me, was the dearness of corn.

I got to an eminence and began speaking to them. Many seemed inclined to go back with me to the school; but the devil stirred up his oldest servants, who violently rushed upon the others, beating and tearing and driving them away from me. I rode up to a ruffian who was striking one of our colliers, and prayed him rather to strike me. He would not, he said, for all the world, and was quite overcome. I turned upon one who struck my horse, and he also sunk into a lamb. The few violent colliers forced on the more quiet ones into the town. I seized one of the tallest and earnestly besought him to follow me: that he would, he said, the world over. About six more I pressed into Christ's service. We met several parties, stopped, and exhorted them to join us. We gleaned a few from every company, and grew as we marched along singing to the school. From one till three we spent in prayer that evil might be prevented and the lion chained. Then news was brought us that the colliers were returned in peace. They had quietly walked into the city without sticks or violence. All who saw were amazed, for the leopards were laid down. Nothing could have more shown the change wrought in them than this rising. I found afterwards that all our colliers to a man had been forced into it. Having learned of Christ not to resist evil, they went a mile with those who compelled them, rather than free themselves by violence." While the

work was thus manifesting rich fruit in Bristol and Kingswood, John Wesley extended his travels to Wales, where Howell Harris, a native preacher, had already awakened deep religious feeling. Whitefield had also preceded him here, and opened the way to the highways and hedges, for the people rushed in masses to hear the word of life. Everywhere the Holy Spirit wrought with the word, and many hundreds were, to all human appearance, converted to God.

As the circuit of these earnest men became extended, the opposition to their mode of proceeding increased. Some of the readers of these pages may need to be reminded that for the most part England is divided into parishes, over which a clergyman is placed by the civil government, while in the United States all our religious societies are established by the voluntary exertions of those who wish to do good. These English ministers in Wesley's time looked upon the labours of any other person in their parishes as an intrusion; yet very many of them, not being converted themselves, could not feel deeply interested for the conversion of others. Wesley was therefore frequently called upon to give his reasons for having no particular parish of his own, and for thus itinerating and preaching in the fields through all the parishes. This he did in the following language:—

"Suffer me now to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon all the world as my parish,—thus far, I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all who are willing to hear the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to. And sure I am that his blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I therefore to be faithful in fulfilling the work he hath given me to do. His servant I am, and as such am employed according to the plain direction of his word:—'As I have opportunity, doing good unto all men.'

"When I was told I could preach no more in this, and this, and another church, so much the more those who could not hear me there flocked together when I was at any of the societies, where I spoke more or less, though with much inconvenience, to as many as the room I was in could contain. But after a time, finding that rooms would not contain a tenth part of the people that were earnest to hear, I determined to do the same in England as I had done in a warmer climate; namely, when the house would not contain the congregation, to preach in the open air."

"Field-preaching was therefore a sudden expedient, a thing submitted to rather than chosen, and therefore submitted to because I thought preaching even thus better than not

preaching at all:—first, in regard to my own soul, because, a dispensation of the gospel being committed to me, I did not dare not to preach the gospel; secondly, in regard to the souls of others, whom I everywhere saw 'seeking death in the error of their life.'"

While Wesley thus paused to answer his accusers, the Holy Spirit wrought with the word, and many hundreds of souls were in the judgment of charity converted to God. Some, when under conviction for sin, or in the abundant joy of the new birth, were thrown into extraordinary bodily exercises, or cried out with a loud and confused noise. Having occasion to reprove the extravagance and visionary sentiments adopted by some of his societies, he remarks that they were not to judge of a genuine work of grace by feelings,—"No, nor by any dreams, visions, or revelations supposed to be made to their souls, any more than by their tears or any involuntary effects wrought upon their bodies. I warned them that all these things were of a doubtful and disputable nature, and were to be tried by a further rule to be brought to the only sure test,—the law and the testimony."

Thus far we see the word both life-giving and powerful in producing holy fruit among the masses of the poor and the neglected. If there had been some tares among the wheat, and human weakness amid divine power, the

general character of the work was abundantly vindicated, as the gospel to the poor and as the power of God in the weak to confound the mighty. But we shall see that though not "many," yet some noble are called.

CHAPTER XI.

NOBLE WOMEN.

If the Wesleys and Whitefield were eminently fitted to offer salvation through the gospel to the neglected, the poor and the ignorant, they were also well qualified to preach Christ to the rich and noble. They were educated and gifted. Their manners were courteous and refined. The influence of the Holy Spirit rested so richly upon their hearts that the fear of man was taken away, and they spoke plain words in high places to ears accustomed to flattery.

Said the proud Duchess of Buckingham, after hearing them preach, "Their doctrines are most repulsive, and strongly tinctured with impertinence and disrespect towards their superiors. It is monstrous to be told we have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl the earth."

The Countess of Suffolk, the celebrated court beauty of her day, once heard Whitefield at the palace of a noble friend. When the preacher had finished and retired, she indulged in a violent gush of angry feeling, declaring the sermon was a deliberate attack upon her,

and accused her friends of exposing her foibles and sins to the preacher. She was with difficulty convinced of the contrary, and would never forgive the faithfulness of the servant of God.

Among the noblemen who heard these stirring sermons were the Dukes of Cumberland and Bolton, and Lords Lonsdale and Hervey. Even the Prince of Wales listened occasionally to their earnest appeals. Among those of this class who heard their words gladly were Lord St. John, half-brother to the skeptic Bolingbroke, Lord Dartmouth, a member of the Privy Council and Lord-Steward of the King's Household. These both witnessed a good confession amid much reproach and ridicule, and died in the hope of the gospel. But it was among the women of the circles of the rich and noble that their preaching won its brightest trophies. We will present a few among many distinguished examples, to illustrate both the character of the preaching and the revival of this period. We shall anticipate in part the immediate thread of our narrative; but the following examples have an intimate connection with the commencement of field-preaching.

Some time near 1739 or '40, Mr. Ingham, the former pupil and fellow-missionary of John Wesley, was preaching through Yorkshire with great effect, wherever he could collect an audience, whether in the pulpit or field. Among those who heard him and were profited was

Lady Margaret Hastings, sister of Lord Huntingdon. She became a Christian of singular piety and usefulness, and subsequently the wife of Mr. Ingham. Soon after she found peace in believing, she visited her brother. Lady Huntingdon had already been disposed by the Holy Spirit to seek Christ, but she was seeking life in the darkness which had so long encompassed the Wesleys. She knew not the way of faith, and consequently the way she trod was comfortless. Conversing with Lady Margaret on one occasion, Lady Huntingdon was surprised to hear her say, speaking of personal experience in religion, "that since she had known and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation, she had been as happy as an angel." The words made a deep impression. So great was her conviction for sin that she became indisposed in body. She sought Christ earnestly. She "agonized to enter into the strait gate;" and soon the bitterness of unpardoned sin was exchanged for "joy unspeakable and full of glory." The change in her ladyship was apparent to all; nor did she attempt to hide her light, but openly confessed Christ. She rapidly recovered her bodily health, and went forth into the circle of the proud nobility, humbly and boldly setting forth Christ as "the riches of the world." Her doctrine and spirit greatly disgusted the devotees of fashion and pleasure, for such were most of her friends, and they desired Lord

Huntingdon to interpose his authority to stop this dangerous taint of Methodism in the very palaces of nobility; for all earnest piety was at this time stigmatized by this contemptuous name. But her husband highly respected his wife, though he did not sympathize with her religious feelings. He courteously gave her the largest liberty in carrying out her religious convictions.

One of the most important steps taken by Lady Huntingdon after her conversion was to open a correspondence with John and Charles Wesley. She became a warm admirer of their preaching and a constant attendant upon the meetings of the "societies." Lord Huntingdon dying soon after, and her oldest son being yet a child, she was left in the entire management of her estates. Her house was opened for the preaching of the Wesleys, Whitefield, and kindred spirits, to which flocked the noblest in name and position in England. Thus commenced the religious life of one of the greatest and most pious women of her own or any age. Thus commenced her labours for Christ, which were continued for more than fifty years, by the consecration to him of her superior talents, wealth and position, in building chapels, in educating ministers, in strengthening the weak and in stimulating the strong in high and low places, and especially in letting the light of a holy example shine in every circle. An important religious connection acknowledged her

as its head and director. We find the Wesleys for more than thirty years exchanging with her frequent letters of mutual counsel and friendship, preaching in her mansions and chapels, sitting at her hospitable table, bearing a common reproach, and defending a common faith.

While this noble lady was bearing the cross of Christ in her exalted sphere, there was in the obscure town of Laytonstone one who at a later period had come under the influence of the field-preaching. Her nobility was intellectual and moral only, though belonging to a respected and wealthy family. She had received the gospel in its power from the preachers of Mr. Wesley's order, and immediately sought him as her father in the gospel. Her name was Bosanquet, late in life the distinguished wife and widow of John Fletcher. Desiring earnestly to do good, Miss Bosanquet, at twenty-three years of age, took a house in Laytonstone, in company with a female friend as a hired assistant. Here she established on her own resources what might be termed an orphans' home. At this place, and subsequently in Yorkshire, she devoted a large fortune to this noble purpose. Amid reproaches and pecuniary difficulties, for twenty-five years she persevered, effecting an amount of good which eternity only can reveal.

Lady Glenorchy, another co-labourer of the Wesleys and Whitefield, belonged to the Scotch

nobility, and was the Lady Huntingdon of her country. She was largely indebted in spiritual things to the latter lady. Her biographer says:—"Though fitted to shine in courts, she resolved, in her twenty-third year, to choose Christ rather than the pleasures of the world. Her desire to be the instrument of doing good in the world led her to devote the whole of her life to plans of beneficence and her whole fortune to their execution. The institutions which remain to this day show that her views of usefulness had been by her extended beyond her abode upon earth. But what perhaps forms the most striking feature in her character is the proof she has given of the efficacy of true religion to resist the mighty snares and temptations of high rank, of great fortune, and powerful worldly influence and friends. No one of these, nor all of them combined, although employed with all their subtlety and all their powers, ever shook her fidelity to God and religion; and it is a proof to those in high life what may be done for the cause of Christ, if there be integrity, in the midst of the most unfavourable circumstances."

This noble lady's labours for Christ consisted in building chapels from her private funds, paying in whole or in part the salaries of ministers to the poor and neglected, clothing and educating destitute children, and defending against cavilling courtiers, formal ministers, and lukewarm Christians, a spiritual Christianity.

There was among the Scottish nobility a distinguished friend of Lady Glenorchy. She possessed a nobility of nature as well as birth. This was Darcy, Lady Maxwell. Her heart had been prepared for the converting grace of God by the early loss of her much-loved husband, Sir Walter Maxwell. The labours of John Wesley were then blessed to the establishing of her faith in Christ. She became a member of his society in Edinburgh, and bore with him and kindred spirits "the offence of the cross." Desiring to let her light shine, she became actively engaged for the salvation of souls in that city. Her attention was first directed to the children of the poor. She established a school for them on the most intelligent and permanent basis. She arranged a regular course of study, appointed teachers of tried piety as well as thorough education, and carefully and frequently examined the scholars in their religious and mental progress. This school she permanently endowed; and it is consequently in successful operation at the present time among the poor in the metropolis of Scotland.

Her country residence was situated among a very wicked and much-neglected community. She immediately invited them to her own mansion to hear the word of life. Here the Wesleys, Whitefield, the co-labourers of Lady Huntingdon and Glenorchy, and the pious ministers of every name, preached the word of life.

We have thus given a few illustrations of the power of the gospel as exhibited in the conversion and lives of "honourable women." Many more might be selected. We might exhibit many examples of equally sound conversions from among the poor. But that would not be so remarkable, nor does it seem to show so strikingly the great power of God. We would have our narrative teach that the rich and the poor may meet together in the provisions of the gospel and become "one in Christ."

CHAPTER XII.

FOLDS FOR THE LAMBS.

We left John and Charles Wesley itinerating about London and Bristol; Whitefield had just before (August, 1739) embarked for America. Unhappy contentions had arisen in the Moravian Society at Fetter-lane, London. To this company of believers the Wesleys were much attached, for they had been to them friends in adversity. Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon had worshipped there with profit. But unscriptural sentiments began to be entertained by them. Molther, one of their German teachers, taught that to attain salvation we must be still; that to use the means of grace without faith was a sin, and that when we had faith, the means of grace—such as the sacraments and social prayer—were unnecessary and wrong, because it was working for salvation. They therefore insisted on stillness only, while unfortunately they possessed a very unquiet spirit. Wesley bore long with them, and laboured much for peace. Peter Bohler, his old teacher in the gospel, coming to England just at that time, lent his powerful influence to correct the error. All availed little, and in

The Old Foundry.

June, 1740, Wesley and those opposed to the "quietism" withdrew. The error did not very extensively prevail among the converts of the times, nor in the Moravian church.

In anticipation of a necessity of a separate place of worship, Wesley had rented an old cannon-foundry situated in the middle of Moorfields. It was a dilapidated brick building. The money necessary to rent and to repair it had been kindly advanced by two gentlemen personally unknown to him. Thus provided, the house was repaired and dedicated, amid joy more heart-felt than costly temples generally inspire. Here for many years the gospel was preached with great success. The foundry became a famous house in the early history of Methodism.

Just after its erection a few serious persons came to Wesley to be instructed in religious things. The young converts also needed to be guided and guarded. The number of such increased rapidly. Wesley's desire to do them good forbade his turning them away, but it was impossible for him or his brother to attend personally to the care of these souls. What could be done? He was much perplexed; but, with his usual self-possession, he waited to see the suggestions of God's providence. Being at one time at Bristol, in consultation with some prominent members of the society, much solicitude was expressed concerning their money interests. They were embarrassed with debt for

their place of worship and general expenses. One suggested that the members be divided into companies of ten or twelve, and a person appointed to be at the head of each company; that each member pay to his leader a penny a week, and that they should have weekly meetings for that purpose. "Or," continued the suggestor, "if some cannot pay so much, others can pay more, and a penny a week may be collected." "That will do," said Wesley, decidedly, as if his mind were anticipating a good greater than the mere collecting of money.

The plan worked well. When the classes met and had paid their weekly pledge, they remained to pray and encourage each other in the divine life. This at once suggested to the observing mind of Wesley the means of supplying the minister's lack of service at the foundry and in the other societies. They were divided, as in the Bristol arrangement, into classes of about twelve each. A leader from among the most intelligent and experienced in piety was placed over them. They met weekly to relate their Christian experience, to pray, and to receive such instruction as the leader was able to give.

Wherever the Wesleys preached, the people looked to John to direct and counsel them. Every thing in the history seems to indicate that he had no preconceived plan of being the head of a new religious body. His superior learning, ability, age and piety, in connection

with the uninstructed condition of most of the converts, caused them naturally to consider him as their head. He took the guidance of them therefore as a duty he owed to the Great Shepherd and to his flock.

Wesley selected and appointed the leaders to be thus his under-shepherds. He also drew up a few simple rules for the government of the societies. The only condition of admission was "a desire to flee from the wrath to come." A continuance of membership was on the condition of manifesting this desire by—first, a strict moral life, and, secondly, by seeking after a saving faith in Christ, in the use of all the means of grace. These rules "enjoined no peculiar opinions, and related entirely to moral conduct, to charitable offices, and to the observance of the ordinances of God. Churchmen or Dissenters, walking by these rules, might become and remain members of these societies, provided they held their doctrinal views and disciplinary prepossessions in peace and love."

At first Wesley met these separate classes in turn; but as their number multiplied this became impracticable. To supply as far as possible a pastor's lack of service, he met the leaders often, instructing and counselling them, and appointed a united meeting of the classes quarterly, in which all might receive his instructions and admonitions. At these quarterly visitations, to those whose attendance and general conduct gave evidence of a sincere de-

sire to live a holy life, he gave a ticket inscribed with his name and containing also a verse of Scripture. Those who were denied these tickets were no longer permitted to remain members. The tickets were letters of introduction to any other society under Wesley's care. Such was the origin of "the classes," the "quarterly meetings," and the "love-feast tickets," in later times so characteristic of Wesleyan Methodism.

In this government of the societies Charles Wesley deferred to his brother, but in mutual confidence exercised with him a large authority. At this time they saw eye to eye; and to the end of their lives, united in unabated affection, they sought the same end, the salvation of men.

Whitefield early in his field-preaching had erected a rude, temporary, but very capacious, building in Moorfields, which he named The Tabernacle. Some others were built under his directions by those awakened under his powerful ministry, and the societies which met in them acknowledged him as their guide and ruler. But the management of the internal affairs of these religious societies did not suit either his talents or habits. His temperament was too ardent and his itinerating too extensive. He was now in England, and then suddenly flying away to America. One "connection" could not bind him, nor one continent satisfy his abounding zeal. He yielded therefore, in a great measure, the work of organizing

the societies to other hands having greater gifts for the work, while as a popular preacher he remained without an equal.

Mr. Ingham, to whose success as a field-preacher we have referred, was for a time very successful in establishing well-regulated societies. We have no means of ascertaining their precise form of discipline; but they were under his general superintendence. In the height of his popularity they numbered eighty. But so many unworthy persons became connected with these societies that the discipline proved ineffectual, and the eighty societies were reduced to thirteen.

But Lady Huntingdon, next to John Wesley, was best fitted by nature and divine grace to be an overseer of those whom God brought into his kingdom by her instrumentality. No doubt her social position and wealth aided her in this important work. Possessing a mind of marked strength and penetration, and a position as a member of a distinguished family of the nobility which gave her great influence, and especially being deeply devoted to the work of saving souls, she was consequently sought as an adviser in giving direction to the revival which had commenced. As in the case of Wesley, she exerted the authority of character. If she governed, it was not obtrusively. In moulding the disciplinary character of her connection, she exercised a moral, not a legal, authority. For many years the numerous

chapels which she either built or aided by her generous donations were supplied by her, as "a peeress of the realm," with clergymen regularly ordained in the church of England. This proceeding had always been considered not quite "regular," and, towards the close of her long life, was decided in the ecclesiastical courts to be illegal. But, by putting these places of worship in the legal relations of the chapels of dissenters from the Established church, and the ministers withdrawing from that church, Lady Huntingdon could proceed as she had done. This step was taken. Her students from that time received an ordination not episcopal, and her societies became a distinct denomination. In answer to the inquiry of what church they were, one of her distinguished ministers and trustees remarks, "We desire to be esteemed members of Christ's catholic and apostolic church, and essentially one with the church of England, of which we regard ourselves as living members. And though, as the church of England is now governed, we are driven to modes of ordaining ministers and maintaining societies not amenable to what we think abused episcopal jurisdiction, yet our mode of governing and regulating our congregations will probably be allowed to be essentially episcopal. With us a few preside. The doctrines we subscribe are those of the church of England in the literal and grammatical sense. Nor is the liturgy of the

church performed more devoutly, or the Scriptures better read for the edifying of the people, by any congregations in the realm than by those in our connection."

Of Lady Huntingdon's control over these societies one of her biographers thus speaks:— "She kept herself carefully informed of the state of affairs, appointed and removed ministers, directed the labours of students, appointed laymen in each congregation to superintend its secular concerns, indited letters of advice and admonition, received applications for preachers, conducted a numerous correspondence: in a word, such was her strong personal and moral influence, that no changes were made nor plans executed in the 'connection' without her counsel and approbation."

Lady Glenorchy, following her example and counsel, did the same in Scotland to a considerable extent. Her money and influence were used to form societies, erect chapels, and support preachers.

It must be remembered that, in their view, a necessity was laid upon these reformers thus to act. It pleased the Head of the church to convert many sinners. The Established churches care did not take them in, nor did their pastors for them. The Wesleys and Lady Huntingdon were themselves zealous members of the Established church. The former especially only sought to take care of converted persons and those seeking conversion, many of whom

were already members of the church. Hence, they did not form "churches," but "societies." There was a peculiar meaning in the use of the latter word. They were, under the Wesleys, associations of serious persons. They met for worship out of the regular church-hours generally. They were encouraged to go to the churches of the Establishment when it was possible, to receive the sacraments.

We have spoken of the way in which, by classes and class-leaders and quarterly meetings, Wesley supplied in part his lack of service to the societies; but it will be seen at once that there must have been, as the societies increased in numbers, a lack of preachers. We shall see how this difficulty was met.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SHEPHERDS.

While the Wesleys and Whitefield were itinerating at large, a few parish ministers partook of their spirit. Philip Doddridge, author of the "Family Expositor" of the New Testament, Isaac Watts, the writer of so many spiritual songs, with Romaine, Venn, Fletcher, Berridge, and a goodly number of kindred spirits, opened their pulpits to the itinerants and bore with them the reproach of an earnest piety. Their co-operation was something more than a passive approval. Though not all agreeing in every doctrinal sentiment, many of them were seen for more than an ordinary life of active service side by side, building up the Redeemer's kingdom. Though not standing at the head of a separate denomination of Christians, their influence was a leaven in the denominations to which they severally belonged. A sketch of the labours of the Wesleys is very imperfect except the co-operation of such men is taken into account. They were refreshed by their occasional presence, assisted by their counsels, and sustained by their active labours. Whether they were more immediately in con-

nection with Lady Huntingdon or John Wesley as leaders, or whether, being animated by the same spirit, they preached the same stirring truth—salvation by faith alone—as independent ministers, was not essential. In the midst of a common opposition they were "labourers together with God."

A passing introduction of the reader to a few of this class will show more fully how the work which we have seen in its beginning was carried forward. Of Dr. Doddridge it is remarked that he was eminently a man of candour and liberality. "A rigid spirit and a stiffness about things non-essential he very much disliked; he entertained a high opinion of the piety and zeal of many of those clergymen of the church of England who were stigmatized as Methodists. He had seen the good effects of their itinerant labours in his own neighbourhood; he had heard of more on unquestionable authority; and this left him no room to doubt that God had owned them. He was well aware that there was some enthusiasm among them, and much among their followers; but he was nevertheless convinced that they were eminently useful in rousing the attention of the careless and indifferent to the great things of eternity, in leading them to read and study the Scriptures and attend upon religious worship in places where they might be better instructed and edified. Many friendly and faithful admonitions he gave them; and it was no incon-

siderable evidence of the humility and candour of some of the great leaders of Methodism, particularly Mr. Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon, with whom he was more congenial in sentiment, that they desired him freely to tell them what he thought amiss in their sentiments and conduct, and that they received his admonitions with thankfulness. He endeavoured to show them their errors and regulate their zeal, which he thought a more friendly part and more becoming a Christian minister than to revile and ridicule them."*

At the commencement of the great work of God of which we are attempting a sketch, Dr. Isaac Watts was advanced in years and feeble in body. In 1742 he became acquainted with some of the leaders of Methodism. He rejoiced in what God wrought by them, and in his Master's name bade them go forward. The benediction of such a teacher in Israel was no small encouragement. He was called to the church in heaven in 1748.

There was a young man at Oxford with Whitefield and the Wesleys, who knew them and their religious zeal only to avoid and despise them. But this young man, by a train of remarkable providences, became a zealous Christian, and the eloquent preacher of St. Dunstan's and St. George's, Hanover Square, London. This was the celebrated William

* "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon."

Romaine. "He had been elected to St. Dunstan's somewhat before his appointment to St. George's, Hanover Square, and at both places the word of the Lord, preached in the light of love, was glorified. Mr. Romaine's now eminent position drew attention to his voice, his manner, and more especially to the subject he treated, to the dissimilarity of all around him to what was observed in other churches. Although he still adhered to the written sermon, he delivered it with energy and pathos, and great and small bore testimony to the power with which he spoke. The gospel from his mouth appeared to them another gospel from that which they had heard before. His fame spread; multitudes thronged him; the church was crowded and the parishioners discommoded; the merely formal among the clergy were tacitly reproved by his example,—so opposite to their's,—and a conspiracy was formed to remove him."* And they did remove him; but Lady Huntingdon made him one of her chaplains, and thus, under the influence of a "peer of the realm," he became more than ever a co-labourer with the itinerant and field-preachers.

The Rev. Henry Venn, author of the "Complete Duty of Man," was one of the faithful ministers of this period. He entered the sacred office with little appreciation of the

* "Lady Huntingdon and Her Times," vol. i. p. 131, London, 1844.

true and only plan of salvation. But a severe sickness and a providential acquaintance with Whitefield and his coadjutors were sanctified in causing him to experience the power of saving faith. He recovered from his sickness to become identified in affection and labour with them. He was appointed soon after the minister of the important parish of Huddersfield, in West Yorkshire, one hundred and ninety miles northwest of London, and became the apostle of that whole region.

The Rev. Henry Piers was Vicar of Bexley. He and his excellent wife were brought to the knowledge of the truth by the labours of Charles Wesley. He bore a faithful testimony in favour of the revived doctrines of the church of England before the University of Oxford, proposing in the same discourse the question whether they as clergymen exhibited the tempers and conduct which these Bible truths required. The chancellor, with most of his clerical brethren, arose in the midst of the discourse, and left the preacher to finish his sermon to laymen. But Mr. Piers patiently endured the insult, published his sermon, and defended its doctrines from the Episcopal ritual and the word of God.

"In 1744, Charles Wesley paid a visit to the Rev. Vincent Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, in Kent, which led to the formation of an intimate and confidential friendship with that very intelligent pious, and amiable man. Mr. Perronet, having heard partial and exaggerated

accounts of the Mr. Wesleys, entertained an unfavourable opinion concerning them. But upon forming a personal acquaintance with John Wesley his opinions were changed.

"From this time Mr. Perronet entered fully into those views of divine truth which the Wesleys inculcated, and became a spiritual and holy man. Two of his sons were afterwards itinerant preachers. To the end of his life he was the cordial friend and wise adviser of John and Charles Wesley under all their public and domestic cares."*

We will introduce two more only of this class of the early leaders of the reformation of the middle of the last century; but these are marked characters. The first is the Rev. John Berridge, of the church of Everston. There was every thing in the personal appearance, voice, accomplishments and character of Mr. Berridge to make him a popular and effective preacher. His wealth made him independent of pecuniary help, and enabled him to do much in this way for the relief of others. His labours were incessant, and were remarkably attended by immediate success.

"For twenty-four years he continued to ride nearly one hundred miles and to preach some ten or twelve sermons every week. At home, for his hearers who came from a distance, his table was served and his stable opened for their

* Life of Charles Wesley.

horses; and abroad, houses and barns were rented, lay-preachers supplied, and his own expenses paid, out of his own pocket. The gains of his vicarage, of his fellowship and of his patrimonial income, and even his family plate, were appropriated to support his liberality."

John Fletcher, of Madely, was for many years an intimate companion and fellow-labourer of Berridge. His reasons for choosing Madely are very characteristic of the man. Mr. Hill, his patron, informed him that the parish at Dunham, in Cheshire, then vacant, was at his service, and remarked, by way of recommendation of his offer, that there was a good income,—about two thousand dollars a year,—but little labour; that the situation was healthy and surrounded by a fine sporting country. Mr. Fletcher thanked his patron cordially for his kindness, but added, "Alas, sir, Dunham will not suit me; there is too much money and too little labour." "Few clergymen make such objections," said Mr. Hill. "It is a pity to decline such a living, as I do not know that I can find you another. What shall we do? Would you like Madely?" "That, sir, would be the very place for me;" and Mr. Hill had no difficulty in persuading the minister of Madely to exchange his poor, obscure parish for the rich and eligible one of Dunham, and Mr. Fletcher was accommodated in his own way.

He was subsequently employed by Lady

Huntingdon to preach occasionally as her chaplain in the most prominent chapels of her connection, and was by her appointed president of her theological school in Wales.

Mr. Venn, who differed from him in several points of doctrine, thus speaks of him:—"I have known all the great men for these fifty years, but I have known none like him. I was intimately acquainted with him, and was once under the same roof with him for six weeks, during which time I never heard him say a single word which was not proper to be spoken, and which had not a tendency to minister grace to the hearers."

Fletcher's fine personal appearance, solid learning, remarkable elocution, and the rich imagery with which he clothed his affluent thoughts, together with an intimacy of communion with God seldom attained, combined to constitute him, next to John Wesley, perhaps the most influential minister of early Methodism.

Such were some of the shepherds which God placed over the flock which we have seen newly gathered from the wilderness of the world. They were scattered here and there,—a few compared with the multitudes who needed such pastors. The harvest was ripe, and many more labourers were needed, who should be called of God into the vineyard. We shall next see the method that was resorted to for the sup ply of the deficiency.

CHAPTER XIV.

'THE HELPERS.'

THE reader will recollect the necessity which suggested and called for the appointment of class-leaders in the Wesleyan societies. This was one step towards raising up a new class of preachers immediately from the lay-members. But its tendency to such a result was not seen at the time. Wesley's convictions that no person could properly preach without a regular ordination were very strong. But, being very much pressed for assistance, especially in the society at London, he at one time, in 1740, left Thomas Maxfield to strengthen them by his prayers and exhortations. Maxfield had been one of the first-fruits of his labours at Bristol. He possessed a fervent spirit and great eloquence of speech. His exhortations were with such power that the society-rooms were thronged to hear him. Lady Huntingdon wrote of him to Mr. Wesley as follows:—

"He is one of the greatest instances of God's peculiar favour that I know; he is raised from the stones to sit among the princes of the earth. He is my astonishment! How is God's power shown in weakness! The first time I made

him expound, expecting little from him, I sat over against him and thought what a power of God must be with him to make me give attention to him. But before he had gone over one fifth part, any that had seen me would have thought I had been made of wood or stone, so quite immovable I both felt and looked. His power in prayer is quite extraordinary. To deal plainly, I could either talk or write for an hour about him."

Mr. Maxfield began at once to preach. Sinners were awakened and converted, and believers greatly strengthened. Large and attentive congregations listened to him. But the sense of propriety of even many of the most pious was greatly offended at the presumption of a layman in preaching. Mr. Wesley was greatly offended too, and hastened to London to arrest the evil. His mother lived at that time in his house connected with the foundry. Perceiving that her son was highly displeased, she inquired the cause. He answered, "Mother, I learn that Thomas Maxfield has turned preacher!" His mother looked at him seriously, and replied, "John, you know what my sentiments have been; you cannot suspect me of favouring readily any thing of this kind; but take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him also yourself."

He accordingly heard Maxfield preach, and at once yielded his approbation. Thus encouraged, Maxfield was for a long time to Mr. Wesley as a "right hand." After labouring several years as a lay-preacher, he was ordained by the Bishop of Derry, at Mr. Wesley's particular request. On receiving him for ordination the bishop remarked, "Sir, I ordain you to assist that good man, John Wesley, that he may not work himself to death."

Maxfield's example was soon followed by many others. It only remained for the ministers higher in influence to direct and regulate in the carrying out of this appointment,—not to suppress it.

Wesley had scarcely announced his approval of Maxfield, before another extraordinary character was ushered into his presence, having God's commission to preach. His name was John Nelson, a poor mason who had come from Yorkshire to London to labour at his trade. He mingled in the crowd at Moorfields and heard Wesley. He trembled under the word, but soon found peace in believing. He then began at once to try to save others. He fasted one day in the week and gave the food so saved to the poor. He reproved Sabbath-breaking and all open sin, and led all he could to hear Wesley preach. So great was his solicitude for the salvation of the friends he had left in Yorkshire, that, the Christmas following his conversion, he left London at a

sacrifice of fifty dollars and turned his face homeward. He says, "I then had no more idea of preaching than of eating fire." When he told the story of his new birth to his mother, she answered, "Why, John, your head is turned." "Yes, mother," replied John, with deep emotion,—"and my heart too." Soon after he attended a religious meeting. At its close he began to tell the people what God had done for him. Some laughed, many disputed, and a few heard the word gladly. This was noised abroad, and every evening, when the labour of the day was over, the neighbours went to John Nelson's to dispute his new notions. He turned over the Bible to confirm his experience by the word. They soon ceased to gainsay, and crowds came to hear him exhort and pray. So deep was the interest and so manifest the Spirit of God on these occasions, that those who were awakened and converted said, "John, preach to us." At this John was startled, and abandoned his post and fled. But a sense of duty followed him, and he returned and preached, and hundreds were greatly rejoiced. Embarrassed by his novel and unexpected position, Mr. Nelson sent to London, informing Mr. Wesley of all that had happened and all he had done, and asked his advice. Wesley went to see him, tarried a week, heard John preach, witnessed the evidence of the approbation of God in a large society which was formed, and he accepted Nelson also as a fellow-helper.

Among the servants of Lord Huntingdon there was a man of some education and of good natural ability, whose heart God had turned to the truth by the preaching at his lordship's house. His name was David Taylor. His piety and good sense induced the countess to send him to the hamlets in the vicinity of her residence to speak to the people. He soon became a field-preacher of great popularity, and was the means of forming a large circle of societies.

On one occasion, while Whitefield was preaching in Nottingham, a party of young men agreed among themselves to award a prize to that one of the company who should succeed best in mimicking the style of Mr. Whitefield. After three of them had in turn exhausted their stock of buffoonery, a fourth, named Thorpe, mounted the table. He opened the Bible, and his eyes rested upon these words:— "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." It was to him like the handwriting of God on the wall to the guilty king of Babylon. The few words he uttered were the expressions of a convicted sinner. A profound silence pervaded the company when he came down from his mock pulpit, and the party broke up without merriment. Mr. Thorpe became an eminent lay-preacher, and finally an ordained minister over an Independent church.

In these and various ways the want of more educated ministers was supplied from the hum-

blest walks of life. In many instances, though men of strong sense and good natural orators, they were homely in their style. There was too much sincerity for any thing that did not aim directly at the conversion of the heart, and too much itinerating for literary pursuits. The churches of the learned were often forsaken by plain persons for the more practical preaching of these simpler men.

The Bishop of Worcester had observed a poor man very attentive to his preaching. But, having missed him for some time, he asked him one day why he had thus forsaken the house of God. "If you will not be offended, my lord," said John, "I will tell you. I have been to hear the Methodists, because I can better understand their plain words." "You are right," said the generous prelate; "go, John, where you can best save your soul; and here is a guinea for you," handing him the money.

Thus were preachers and guides provided both for the rich and poor, for the learned and unlearned, and the extraordinary demands of the people were met with extraordinary ministers.

It has been a pleasant task thus far to show how faithfully the good men of whom we have written preached a common salvation, and how cordially they loved each other. It is a sad duty to speak of their disagreements. But in doing so we only exhibit in them a common infirmity,

no less humiliating and instructive because common. If men so truly holy in heart and so ready to suffer the reproach of the cross to save souls allowed for a moment a cloud to overshadow their love for each other, how necessary that we "should watch and be sober"!

At the commencement of field-preaching and the consequent formation of the societies, Calvinists and disbelievers in Calvinism, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Independents, had all united together in love. They agreed to differ on those points which did not separate them from Christ. During Mr. Whitefield's second visit to America, Mr. Wesley seems to have taken a more decided stand against Calvinism; and Whitefield, on the other hand, was confirmed in his Calvinistic views by his intercourse with eminent persons of that belief in New England. Some one sent to him, across the water, a sermon which Wesley had just preached on "Free Grace." To this Whitefield wrote a friendly answer or review, which was published without the knowledge of either Whitefield or Wesley. Copies were scattered among Mr. Wesley's congregation at the foundry. Mr. John Cennick, head-master of the school at Kingswood, a warm friend of Mr. Whitefield, espoused zealously like sentiments. When Mr. Whitefield returned, early in 1741, his spirit was disturbed. A heavy debt for his "Orphan-Home" enterprise in Georgia embarrassed him. The Moravian "quietism" had

disaffected many of his, as it had done many of other societies, and he felt that it was an additional evil that his friends the Wesleys should haven give their extensive influence in favour of what he believed an error.

But their mutual love was strong, and would, we think, have prevailed in inducing them to have laboured together for souls in a harmonious disagreement, if their friends had been equally forbearing. As it was, they separated. Mr. Cennick drew off about half of the society at Kingswood; and from this time these hitherto warm friends and co-labourers had their separate chapels and separate societies. But after a little interval they were again one in love, as they had ever been in purpose. They preached in each other's houses of worship, united in social assemblies for prayer, and stood side by side before the multitudes in the open fields. When, nearly twenty years after, Whitefield was dying on the shores of our own Merrimack, he left tokens of his ardent love for John and Charles Wesley.

CHAPTER XV.

IN PERILS.

THE plain exhibition of gospel truth to a wicked world provokes its opposition, especially if that truth be pointedly applied to the individual conscience. So it was in the days of Christ and his apostles, and so it will ever be.

The history which we are recording affords interesting though sad illustrations of this statement. The Wesleys and Whitefield, with those who co-operated with them, could speak of sufferings for Christ's sake, and many of them could adopt the language of the apostle:—"We are troubled on every side." In their great zeal and large success they were doubtless often led to use measures and language which they afterwards saw to be imprudent, because calculated to excite prejudice where other means might have conciliated their opponents. But it would be expecting more than human nature can ever do in this life, to look for perfect wisdom under such exciting and novel circumstances; and, whatever want of judgment might sometimes have been evinced by these great reformers, it furnished no excuse for the spirit in which they were often opposed.

The aggravating, if not the procuring, cause of much of their persecution, was the countenance given to their enemies by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. There is upon the parish-record of a church in Cornwall, at this day, for the examination of the curious, an entry of five shillings paid from the treasury "to drive the Methodists from the parish."

At one time Charles Wesley had preached at Moorfields, London, to ten thousand people. In going to another appointment on Kennington Common, he crossed a frequented field which lay in his way. The owner prosecuted him for trespass; and he was fined fifty dollars and cost, amounting to nearly one hundred dollars. He paid it, entering on the back of the receipt the significant remark, "I paid them the things I never took;" and at the bottom, "To be re-judged in that day."

His arrest at another time was less serious in its consequences, partaking somewhat of the ludicrous. The grandson and heir of the expelled king, James II., was attempting to regain the authority of the banished family. This heir was known as the Pretender. Charles Wesley was praying in the midst of his vast out-door congregation with great fervency, and the expression dropped from his lips, "O Lord, bring home thy *banished ones*." Some loyal subject of the reigning king informed against him as having spoken treasonable words. Wesley was carried before a magistrate, charged

with that high crime. On his way to the court he expressed his feelings, as he often did, in verse:—

"Jesus, in this hour be near;
On thy servant's side appear;
Call'd thy honour to maintain,
Help a feeble child of man.
* * * *
"All of mine be cast aside,
Anger, fear, and guile and pride;
Only give me from above
Simple faith and humble love.

"Set my face and fix my heart;
Now the promised power impart;
Meek, submissive, and resign'd,
Arm me with thy constant mind."

In answer to the accusations, he remarked to the court that the home of Christians was in heaven; that while pilgrims on earth they were exiles from home, or, in an important sense, "banished ones;" that it was in reference to this that he prayed. The answer was accepted and the case dismissed.

But these annoyances which the preachers suffered were only preludes of more serious troubles. The persecutions against John Wesley first assumed a violent form at Bristol; but the magistrates subdued the disturbance at once. The next outbreak was at London. He was stoned in the street; wildfire and explosive materials were thrown into the room where he was preaching, and attempts were made to unroof the foundry. But the king

gave express commands to the authorities to protect Wesley and his people from lawless molestation. The attacks therefore failed. The scene was next transferred to Wednesbury, a town near Birmingham. A multitude of enraged people assembled in the churchyard, and went through the town, visiting about one hundred Methodist families, breaking the glass, doors and furniture, dragging into the street the women and children, soiling and sometimes tearing to pieces wearing-apparel, and marking their pathway with the mutilation of whatever came in their way. Mechanics' and traders' shops were stripped of tools and merchandise.

A few days after these proceedings, John Wesley quietly mounted a little eminence on the public square near the centre of the town, and preached to a large congregation. From the public service he retired to a friend's house and sat down to write. As the evening drew near the mob gathered about the house, roaring, "Bring out Wesley!" Wesley sent for the leader, who came in, trembling with rage. He spoke to him a few calm words of expostulation. The temper of his mind was changed, and he went out and brought in the next fiercest spirit. By the same subduing moral power they were disarmed, and returned to their companions with a changed purpose. Wesley then went out, stood upon a chair, and uttered words which were always influential with the mob, however mad they might be, when they were

allowed to reach their ears. At this time they heard and were silenced. "He is an honest gentleman!" said one. "We will spill our blood in his defence!" exclaimed another; and so the assurances of good feeling took the place of angry threats.

"What would you have me do?" asked Wesley. "Go to the magistrate's with us," they exclaimed. "I will go cheerfully," replied Wesley, and started off immediately, followed by the crowd. The magistrate was two miles distant, and the night had come on dark and rainy. Having arrived at "his honour's," they informed him that they had brought Mr. Wesley and the Methodists before him. "What have they done?" asked the justice. "Why, please your honour, they sing psalms all day, and make folks get up at five o'clock in the morning. What would your worship advise us to do?" "Go home and be quiet," answered the sensible magistrate.

Seeming determined to have the case tried, they started off, through rain and mud, to Walsal, a neighbouring village. But the magistrate had gone to bed, and would not attend to their demands. The mob then peaceably scattered, leaving Wesley in the hands of his friends, who undertook to escort him to a place of quiet and safety. They had proceeded but a few rods before a mob from Walsal came in overwhelming numbers upon them and swept away all but three of his protectors. Their

course was down hill, the road was slippery, and the darkness unrelieved by a single star. They tried to trip him up, but failed. They aimed heavy blows at him; but, being low of stature, they passed over his head and fell upon his enemies. Amid the darkness, the pattering of the rain, and the confused din of the tramping multitude, Wesley could distinctly hear the shouts, "Knock his brains out!" "Hang him!" "Drown him!" "Kill the dog outright!" "Throw him into the river!" As they rushed forward, he attempted to enter an open door, but was violently pulled back by his hair. The next open door to which he came was the mayor's, who stood near; but he refused him admission, lest the mob should tear his house down. Here the mob came to a stand. The mayor looked passively on. Turning to the people, Wesley said, "Will you hear me?" "Yes," they exclaimed, "we will hear you." With Wesley, on such occasions, to be heard was to triumph. So the state of affairs turned from this moment. A fifteen minutes' talk called forth from the changing multitude many expressions of respect. The champion, a man of great physical power and a fierce spirit, stepped forward proudly and said, "Sir, follow me; not a soul shall touch a hair of your head." Under the guidance of this newly-made friend, he took the road to Wednesbury. They came to a river over which was thrown a bridge; but the bridge was

densely packed with savage men. Without a moment's hesitation, his guide took him upon his broad shoulders and waded with him to the opposite bank, and conducted him through by-paths to a friend's house in safety!

Three days after these events, Charles Wesley entered Wednesbury and preached.

Our limited space will not permit us to follow Whitefield and Charles Wesley through scenes of similar persecution. If it did, we should see them bearing themselves with like self-possession, Christian meekness and overpowering moral boldness. They sought to give no just cause of offence, but they were not willing to yield to popular clamour their religious and civil rights as Englishmen. When it could be done with a reasonable expectation of success, they appealed for protection to the civil powers.

Lady Huntingdon and John Wesley did this on several occasions, in behalf of the people under their care, with good effect. At one time Wesley had been personally insulted by the officers of a regiment quartered at Lowestoft, Suffolk; he wrote immediately to inform their commander, and asked for redress with becoming firmness. "Before," said he, "I use any other method, I beg you, sir, who can do it with a word, to prevent our being insulted any more. We are men; we are Englishmen; as such we have a natural and a legal right to liberty of conscience." The appeal was re-

garded, and the officers demeaned themselves in a more civil manner.

Not succeeding well with the leaders of the reformation, the opposers of religion took another course. It was a time of war. Soldiers for the army and navy were in great demand. The law allowed the arrest of "able-bodied men who had no visible means of earning a living," and their forcible entry upon the list of soldiers after a trial before a magistrate. Unfortunately the wants of the War Department were pressing, and the consciences of the rulers were not tender; so the recruiting officers exercised a shameful tyranny over those who were without wealth or without personal friends of influence. Many such were torn away from their homes and families and sent on foreign campaigns, to die on the battle-field, or by fatigue and want. Seeing that the Methodists were the subjects of the popular ill-will, the officers made it a point to seize the able-bodied men among them for soldiers. They began by seizing John Nelson, of whom we have given some account. Perhaps they could not have made a more unfortunate choice for their purpose. John was intelligent in worldly matters, shrewd, and bold. He was arrested at the instigation of the ale-house keeper, whose business he injured by reforming its patrons. When carried before the magistrate, John demanded to be heard in his own defence; but he was told that the court knew enough about

him. He was kept the following night without food in a dungeon under a slaughter-house. The next morning he was marched to Leeds and left standing in the street under a guard. The officer, to intimidate him, reminded him that his doom was death if he proved disobedient. "I do not fear the man that can kill me, any more than I do him that can cut down a weed," replied Nelson. He was next carried to York and brought before a company of officers, who were to cast lots to determine to whose command he should fall. They were profane, and Nelson reproved them. Turning to him, an officer said, sternly, "We will have no preaching here. We are officers; we will not be reproved by you." "There is but one way to prevent it," replied Nelson, with equal authority; "you must leave off swearing."

They then marched him through the city; and the idle crowd gazed and shouted, exulting that a Methodist preacher was compelled to be a soldier. The officer to whose command he fell offered him money, in order to bind him legally, but he refused to take it. In great anger, the officer handcuffed and sent him to jail. He faithfully rebuked the awful profaneness of the inmates and officers of the jail, during his imprisonment of three days and nights. A few were subdued, and promised to swear no more. To those who came about the jail through curiosity he preached Christ. The next day he was carried before a court-

martial. "It is our business," said the court, "to make you a soldier. It is your business to obey, sir. Sergeant, give him some money." To this Nelson replied firmly, "I am a soldier of the Prince of peace. I shall not fight. I will not take your money, but shall not run away." With this answer the court was obliged to be content. They sent Nelson to the drilling officer; but he so interested the officer by his preaching that he forgot his duty. All felt his persuasive powers. If he was "trained" in the company, their attention became absorbed by his earnest exhortations. Even the people of the city flocked to the muster-field to hear him. At one time it was thought not less than six thousand listened to his discourse. The officers threatened to whip him publicly if he preached again. The next evening Nelson preached with great freedom. "I will not have preaching," said the officer. "Then you must not have swearing," said Nelson; "if it is your right to commit outbreaking sin, it is my right to preach."

He was answered by a command to go to jail, whither multitudes followed him. From the jail he went before a superior officer, who, on learning the complaint against him, gave him liberty to preach as much as he pleased when not on duty, and promised to come and hear him.

As the regiment moved from place to place, the fame of this strange soldier went before it,

and thousands heard him gladly. During one of the haltings of the regiment, John Wesley visited him. His advice to him is characteristic. "Brother Nelson, lose no time. Speak, and spare not."

The persecution of Mr. Nelson was brought to a close through the influence of Lady Huntingdon. She appealed in his behalf to the Earl of Stair, who ordered his release. Again at liberty, Nelson troubled the consciences of the wicked more than ever, and many were made glad through his words.

We have given the details of John Nelson's case to illustrate the kind of persecution which was suffered. Many of the lay-preachers were seized by the press-gangs. Some died under the abuse they suffered. Even Mr. Wesley himself was once taken by them, but not kept. He would have been a more annoying soldier than Nelson. But Maxfield, the first lay-preacher, and subsequently an ordained minister of the Episcopal church, was compelled to serve in the army!

CHAPTER XVI.

DIVINE CHASTENINGS AND HUMAN INFIRMITIES.

In the latter part of the year 1753, John Wesley was seriously ill. His labours and exposure had broken his bodily health, and he appeared to be near the end of his earthly career. On his partial recovery, being unable to travel, he retired to a quiet residence near Bristol, and wrote his brief "Notes on the New Testament." In the same year Mrs. Charles Wesley was seized with the small-pox. Lady Huntingdon, whose friendship for her never knew abatement, administered to her in this hour of need. Scarcely had the mother begun to recover, when her only child,—her little John Wesley,—about a year old, died of the same disease. The sensitive mind of Charles Wesley suffered keenly by these chastenings. The Countess of Huntingdon had been taught to comfort others by her own bereavements. In 1744, the small-pox had carried to the tomb two of her children. In 1746, her husband died suddenly. But still other afflictions awaited her. In May, 1763, she writes, "It has pleased our dear God and only Saviour to take from me my dearest, my altogether lovely

child and daughter, Lady Selina Hastings, the desire of my eyes and continual pleasure of my heart." But the weeping parent was consoled by the triumphant Christian faith of her dying child.

Whitefield and Fletcher shared largely in these chastenings, either in their families or persons. But John Wesley seems to have had but one severe sickness after that already mentioned. His herculean labours were performed by a remarkable power of physical endurance.

But while John Wesley's long life was burdened with but little bodily suffering, his domestic trials were of a peculiar character. The reader will doubtless recollect his disappointment in the affair with the young lady in Georgia. From that time he seems not to have allowed his attention to be turned towards marriage until he was about forty-seven years of age. At this time he contracted an engagement with Mrs. Grace Murray, the widow of a Scotch gentleman, who, from a gay and worldly character, had, under the ministry of Mr. Wesley, become an active Christian, and one of the most efficient helpers in the Methodist societies. It is said that through the interference of his brother Charles this marriage was prevented. It is certain that Mrs. Murray, unexpectedly to Mr. Wesley, became the wife of the Rev. John Bennet, a preacher in the Wesleyan connection. In this disappointment, as in every event, he acknowledged the

hand of Providence and submitted to the divine will.

In the year 1751, Mr. Wesley married Mrs. Vizelle, a lady of independent fortune, a widow of a London merchant. Before the marriage, her property, at Mr. Wesley's request, was legally restricted to her disposal. This marriage proved a very unhappy one. Mrs. Wesley complained of her husband's abundant labour and long journeys, though it was agreed between them, previous to marriage, that he should not preach one sermon nor travel one mile less on that account. He had then said to her, "If I thought I should, much as I love you, I would never see your face more." An intimate ministerial friend of Mr. Wesley, who knew both parties well, says, "She had every appearance of being well qualified for the sphere into which she was introduced. She seemed truly pious, and was very agreeable in her person and manners." She, however, after in vain endeavouring to confine him to a more domestic life, gave place to jealousy, and, after many years of domestic disquietude, separated from him altogether.

From these personal and family adversities we pass to a few unhappy circumstances of a more public character. We have already spoken of the separation of the leading Methodist reformers from the Moravians on account of their "quietism," and of the temporary breach of the Wesleys with Whitefield caused by the

Calvinistic question. These troubles were in the early period of their career. As the societies and the preachers multiplied, the difficulty of union in sentiments and measures increased. It might be expected also that men would occasionally receive the sanction of Lady Huntingdon or Wesley to act as ministers, who would prove unworthy of their confidence and betray their sacred trust. Such being the case, there were some agitating controversies and unhappy separations.

The first marked individual departure from ministerial integrity in Mr. Wesley's connection was by James Wheatley. His preaching was followed by multitudes of people; but, being accused of certain immoral habits, he first equivocated, and then acknowledged them, alleging that many of the preachers did the same thing. This aroused the Wesleys to inquire more strictly into the character of their helpers. Charles was sent on a special visit to every circuit and society, to investigate the conduct of every preacher. The result was highly satisfactory, Wheatley standing alone in his moral delinquency. Wheatley was excluded from the connection; and from this period until now, the character of a Methodist preacher is a subject of yearly inquiry in their stated conferences.

In 1755, a serious difficulty commenced in Mr. Wesley's societies, and among the preachers, in relation to the Lord's supper. At Lon-

don and Bristol his people had partaken of this sacred rite at the hands of such clergymen of the church of England as were co-labourers in the reformation. In most other places the people had gone to their parish churches for the purpose. But not unfrequently they were recognised among the communicants and denied the emblems of their Saviour's death. This and many other circumstances rendered the reception of the ordinance from this source either exceedingly unpleasant or impracticable. Some were in conscience opposed to receiving it in this way. Under these circumstances, a few of Mr. Wesley's preachers administered the Lord's supper to the societies under their care, both without his consent and without any professed ordination.

This gave great offence, especially to Charles Wesley. A conference to consider this matter met at Leeds, and sixty-three preachers were present. The question involved was, "Shall we separate from the church and have the ordinances as a distinct church?" The conclusion arrived at by all was, "Whether it is lawful or not, it is not expedient." All the lay-preachers agreed to refrain from the administration of the sacraments. In this they showed, as Mr. John Wesley remarks, an excellent spirit, for they claimed a right to be vested with Scriptural authority for this solemn service, without episcopal ordination. But Charles Wesley was not satisfied. He

believed that this sentiment would lead to continual dissension and final separation; and, though his love for his brother and his labours in connection with him in and around Bristol and London were unabated, yet he did not from this time take so prominent a part as before in the work. His denominational sentiments never yielded to emergencies as did his brother's. The latter says, in a letter to Charles at this time, "I only fear the preachers' or the people's leaving, not the church, but the love of God and inward or outward holiness. I press them forward to this continually. I dare not in conscience spend my time on externals." And yet John Wesley ever continued strong in his attachment to the church of England.

In 1770 occurred an event the consequences of which were in most respects deeply painful. We refer to the renewal of the Calvinistic controversy. It alienated the brotherly affection of good and great men. It gave occasion for the enemies of religion unjustly to speak evil of it; and if there were compensating advantages they are not generally conceded.

The controversy included questions concerning which the most pious and exemplary Christians of the present day differ, and in respect to which difference of opinion will continue long to exist. The very statement of the history of the controversy is involved and contradictory. We must therefore decline any of

the details of this really important event, or the doctrines or spirit of the opponents. We would however claim one concession in favour of both parties. Their Christian integrity must be allowed to be unimpeachable. The character of men is best known, not by a few good deeds nor an occasional hasty act or word, but by the whole life. If the Countess of Huntingdon and John Wesley, with their co-labourers, have not earned the confidence of the Christian world by their labours, their self-denials, their sufferings for Christ's sake, their prevalent spirit of prayer and faith, and especially by what God wrought by them, then on whom shall that confidence rest? Nor do we think their claims to this confidence greatly differ. When the pen and spirit of controversy is laid aside, they appear to us to be born of the same spirit and to aim at the same end,—namely, their own and the world's salvation.

CHAPTER XVII.

EXTENDED ITINERATING.

The success of Wesley and his friends at London, Bristol, and vicinities, encouraged them to extend their preaching-excursions to other parts of the country. At an early period of his field-preaching, Wesley visited Newcastle, in one of the important coal-regions. Accustomed as he was to witness outbreaking sin, such as profaneness, drunkenness and Sabbath-breaking, he was astonished at the wickedness of the people of Newcastle. Going to the most degraded portion of the town, and taking his stand at the end of the street, he sang with a bold, clear voice the hundredth psalm. The people one after another were attracted to the spot, until about fifteen hundred were assembled, to whom he preached. His audience, wondering, asked, "Who is this?" At the close of the service Wesley cried out, "If you want to know who I am, I am John Wesley; at five o'clock this evening I will preach here again."

At the appointed hour he found the hill-side near the place covered with people. The multitude was greater than he had ever seen even

at London or Bristol. They heard the word with great joy, and he had to retire by stealth in order to meet an engagement in another place.

From Newcastle he visited Epworth. Here had been his childhood's home, and here were the scenes of his father's long and patient labours. It had been many years since he had been in the town. Most who had known him were sleeping quietly in the churchyard: his father's ashes were there. Those of his family who were living had sought other homes, and the old mansion was occupied by strangers. The parish minister had been under obligations to Wesley's father, and to Wesley personally, for kindness shown in his early years. But he refused to admit him to the pulpit where he had often stood as the assistant of his father, and where that father had for nearly half a century preached and solemnized the Christian worship. He even carried his unkindness to persecuting rudeness. He repelled Wesley from the sacramental table, and preached on the evils of enthusiasm, evidently directing his remarks against his distinguished hearer. But the people wished to hear Wesley preach, and it was soon noised abroad that he would be in the churchyard on Sabbath evening at six o'clock. At the appointed hour Epworth and its vicinity had poured into the churchyard almost the whole mass of their population. The preacher stood upon the tombstone of his

Epworth Church.

father, as if when disowned in the church and pulpit of his venerated parent he would take refuge as near as possible to his remains. "I stood," said he, "near the east end of the church, upon my father's tombstone, and cried, 'The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'"

The multitude were awed into profound attention. The associations, the gazing crowd, a profound conviction of the solemnity and importance of the truth he was about to utter, aroused every energy of the preacher's mind. Never perhaps did he preach with more eloquence and effect. Hundreds were awakened and brought to penitence and prayer. For seven successive evenings he preached from the same spot, and the whole country was moved by the power of the word. Much of the harvest of the forty years' ministry of his father was now perhaps gathered.

From the rejoicings o nany and the clamorous opposition of a few, Wesley left Epworth for London, to stand beside the bed of his dying mother. When she had fallen asleep in Christ, Charles Wesley celebrated her departure in his own peculiar verse:—

Weep not for our mother deceased;
Our loss is her infinite gain;
Her soul out of prison's released
And freed from its bodily chain

With songs let us follow her flight
And mount with her spirit above,
Escaped to the mansions of light
And lodged in the Eden of love.

We have followed Wesley thus briefly in some of his principal journeyings in England: we will now glance at his labours in Scotland.

The Presbyterian church is the established church in Scotland, as the Episcopal is in England. Whitefield was the first to endeavour to provoke the love and zeal of its adherents. In the summer of 1741, in compliance with earnest invitations, he visited that country. Here, as elsewhere, he broke away from old usages, and, with a freedom which astonished the people, he uttered his stirring appeals to thousands of listening hearers in the parks and commons of the cities and the fields and highways of the country. Though the Scotch community did not so generally share in the prevailing revival as other portions of the United Kingdom, yet a great work was commenced by this visit. Soon after, Lady Glenorchy and Lady Maxwell exerted themselves to continue what had been thus begun. There were also many faithful coadjutors among the leading ministers of the Presbyterian church.

As early as 1745, Mr. Wesley's fame had attracted attention in Scotland. Some of the eminent men of the country opened a correspondence at that time with him, and thus the way was prepared for a future visit. But it

was not until 1751 that he extended thither his itinerating labours. A colonel of the army, then in quarters near Edinburgh, had pressed him to come. Mr. Wesley having mentioned this to Mr. Whitefield, he replied, "You have no business there; for your principles are so well known, if you spoke like an angel none would hear you. And if they did, you would have nothing to do but to dispute with one and another from morning to night." Wesley replied, "If God sends me, people will hear me; and I will give them no provocation to dispute, for I will studiously avoid controverted points and keep to the fundamental truths of the gospel." He went. Multitudes heard him gladly. He remained but a few days, but promised to send them a preacher.

In 1753 Mr. Wesley again visited Scotland, and was admitted into the pulpits of some of the most eminent divines. He says, "Surely with God nothing is impossible! Who would have believed, five-and-twenty years ago, either that the minister would have desired it, or that I should have consented to preach in a Scotch kirk?"

During one of Mr. Wesley's visits he was walking near the King's College, Aberdeen. While looking at the grounds and the edifices, a party of ladies and gentlemen standing near saw him. After a little consultation, they sent one of their number to him to speak for them. "This is Mr. Wesley, I think?" said he, po-

litely. "The ladies and gentlemen yonder were not fortunate enough to hear you preach on the college-green last evening. You will extremely oblige them if you will give them a short discourse here." Ever ready to sow precious seed, he commenced immediately.

While the work of God was prospering in Scotland, penetrating into the highlands and spreading over the glens, an unfortunate check was given by the publication of statements concerning Mr. Wesley's doctrines. The spirit of controversy at once awoke, and the spirit of love grew cold. Good men laboured apart, who just before were seen side by side, encouraging each other in the divine life and adding strength by their unity to their words of warning to the unconverted.

The preachers under the direction of Lady Huntingdon did much to extend the revival through this kingdom. More fully agreeing with the people on the controverted points of doctrine, they met with fewer obstacles in reviving a deeper spirituality throughout Scotland. Thus, though the reformers halted occasionally through a failure "to see eye to eye" in reference to every truth, their zeal and love found abundant occasion for its developments, and the word continued to take effect in the hearts of men.

In 1747 John Wesley visited Ireland. He arrived at Dublin just in time to attend the morning service. After it was concluded, he in-

troduced himself to the minister, by whom he was invited to preach in the afternoon. He found in the city a small Methodist society, formed by a preacher who had preceded him a few weeks. It was composed mostly of resident English people.

From this time John and Charles Wesley made frequent visits to Ireland, the former making extensive circuits through the country-towns. For a while they pursued their way in peace. But soon a fierce opposition arose. Charles Wesley, with a long list of his co-labourers, was charged before the court with being "a vagabond and a common disturber of his majesty's peace," and a request was made to the court "that they be transported." But the wrath of man wrought the glory and praise of God. Friends of the reformation were raised up on every side. Many Roman Catholics, from whom most of the opposition proceeded, were turned to the true faith of the gospel. Some co-labourers came from this class of the converts, the most useful and remarkable perhaps of whom was Thomas Walsh, a native Irishman. Under the sanction of Mr. Wesley, he commenced preaching in his native tongue. Wonderful effects followed. Nor was this influence gained by empty declamation. He was remarkably skilled in the knowledge of both the Hebrew and Greek languages; and astonishing statements are made of the power of his memory in retaining the exact places

where important words in either of the Testaments in the original are to be found. He conducted his ministry in Ireland very usefully and extensively for ten years.

While this work of zeal was making progress in the Old World, there was going on in parts of America such an increase of attention to the calls of religion as is known in history by the term, "The Great Awakening." Conspicuous among the ministers who were instrumental in this result were the celebrated Jonathan Edwards, then of Connecticut, and Dr. Coleman, of Boston. On the invitation of the latter, Mr. Whitefield had visited New England, and preached with great power and popularity in the churches, public squares, and fields, in the region bounded by the rivers Connecticut and Merrimack. It was here—in the town of Newburyport—that he died, in the year 1770.

Whitefield in his will had transferred his trust in the Orphan-House in Georgia, which he had founded, to Lady Huntingdon. Previous to her assumption of this trust, as well as afterwards, missionaries from her connection were sent to that section of America.

Following Whitefield, several of the fellow-labourers of Wesley, whom official duty, the necessities of poverty, or a spirit of enterprise, had brought to America, began to preach with the zeal of the itinerants of Moorfields and Kingswood. Societies were rapidly gathered, and application was made to Mr. Wesley to

send men of experience who could give themselves wholly to the work. The most distinguished, laborious and successful among these English pioneers of American Methodism was Francis Asbury.

Scarcely had the work well begun when the revolution of 1775 threw the country into confusion. All the prominent English preachers returned to their native country except Asbury, who quietly waited in retirement for the storm of war to pass away. On the return of peace and the establishment of American independence, the American Methodist societies were placed in a peculiar position. Being so far from their former guide, Mr. Wesley, and under a different civil government, the necessity for a distinct church organization was felt and acknowledged both by Wesley and the American societies. As Mr. Wesley was an Episcopalian, he wished that the organization should be episcopal; and this doubtless was the wish of the societies. In England the Wesleyan societies, as we have already stated, were considered as an appendage to the Established church. In America they must be independent; and, while they desired to be episcopal, they more strongly perhaps desired to retain their itinerant ministry, and other peculiarities which had providentially grown up with them. To be episcopal they must have a bishop among themselves; but there were two reasons why they did not ask some bishop of the Eng-

lish church to ordain one of their clergymen to be a bishop. They had reason to think they would be refused, as a request some time before for the ordination of a preacher had not been granted, and they feared if the English church ordained their bishops it would claim some authority over them. Wesley, by the rules of that church, could not by his ordination set apart a clergyman as a bishop; for he was only an elder himself. But he so far went contrary to the authority and teaching of his own church as to claim by the laying on of his own hands, with the assistance of another elder, to set apart Thomas Coke, an "elder" of the English church, to be a bishop of the United Methodist societies in America. He, with others in the same office as himself in the church, set apart Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to be "elders" in the American societies. This "bishop" and these "elders" came to America and ordained Francis Asbury a bishop; and thus the Methodist societies claimed to have authority to complete an episcopal organization. Mr. Wesley urged many reasons for his course in this important business. With these reasons many were not satisfied, and he was much blamed. His brother Charles was one of the most decided in his opposition. He did not believe that his brother John had a right thus to ordain. We will not attempt to argue the question here, but refer our youthful readers, as they shall become old enough to

study such matters, to larger works, only reminding them that Christians may and should love each other while they honestly differ concerning the manner of governing the church. All agree that it is of the first and principal importance to be holy.

The General Conference of the American societies received Mr. Coke and Mr. Asbury as their general "superintendents,"—a name by which Mr. Wesley preferred they should be designated rather than "bishops." From this time Mr. Wesley had but little to do with the American societies, though they still paid him a respectful deference.

While the Wesleyan revival was thus spreading on this continent, the West India islands were feeling its influence. In one of his visits to America Dr. Coke was accidentally detained at Antigua. Here he found a class-leader from England, who had already formed a small class. The preaching of Coke gave them much encouragement; and from this time the work spread, missionaries were sent to them, and great good was accomplished.

Wesley, having thus seen the "connection" which he directed spreading far and wide, became anxious concerning its government after his death. After much reflection and consultation, a legal provision was made to transfer his authority to a conference of a hundred travelling preachers, who should collectively act for the whole body. This "Legal Hun-

dred," and their successors in office, have continued, with an occasional modification of their duties, the same relation to the Wesleyan connection in England to the present time.

We have now approached a late period in the life of Wesley and his surviving co-labourers. We must return in our remaining sketch to more personal matters.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SAVING AND GIVING.

"Ye are not your own" is a great truth of the gospel; your time, your position, your property, are all God's, to be used for his glory. When this truth shall be fully felt by every individual Christian, then a glorious era will dawn on the world. One of the greatest means will then be possessed by the church of extending the gospel over all the earth.

We have given, we think, in these pages, evidence that John Wesley and his companions in the ministry preached the truths of the gospel as they understood them, with faithfulness and success, and that they experienced in a large measure the power of those truths on their own hearts. An additional evidence of their sincere piety will be afforded in this chapter, and in the exhibition of the fact that they gave all their substance to the work of God. They did not regard money as valueless. They did not affect to despise it, nor did they squander it foolishly. They carefully guarded against useless expenditures; they sowed precious seed in almsgiving "plentifully." We shall present the reader with a few illustrations of these

statements from among many which are at hand.

Lady Glenorchy—the "Lady Huntingdon of Scotland," as she has been called—has been introduced to the reader. "Her private charities," says her biographer, "were indeed numberless, and a great part of them unknown. She paid the entire salary of many ministers; others she assisted when insufficiently supported. Six chapels are named as built by her, one costing thirty thousand dollars. At her decease she left thirty thousand dollars to the society in Scotland for 'propagating Christian Knowledge;' thirty thousand dollars to educate young men for the Christian ministry, and the most of the rest of her fortune to charitable purposes." In these bequests she still uses an influence for good.

An item in the financial account of the last year of the widow of Fletcher exhibits the characteristic habit of her Christian life. The entries in her memorandum-book (not intended probably to be seen by others) showed that her expenses were:—

For personal apparel.....	$5 00
Donations to the poor.....	905 00

In no year of her life did the sum expended for her own clothing exceed twenty dollars, while a large property was devoted to the orphan children of the poor.

Berridge commenced his ministry with a fortune inherited from his father; and he could say in old age, "I have given all for Christ," in a sense more extensive and truly evangelical than most Christians. His property, like his physical strength, was an ever-ready offering in the service of Christ. He had no habits of self-indulgence by which money is wasted, and yet he is said to have been poor in old age almost to destitution.

Lady Huntingdon stands eminent for benevolence. She gave away for religious purposes about five hundred thousand dollars.

"It was said by Captain Scott (an intimate and valued friend) that her ladyship was so generous and bountiful that she did actually give to every one who asked her, until, her stock being exhausted, she was destitute. At length it became really necessary to conceal cases from her. On one occasion the captain, with some other ministers, having a case presented to them, and believing the good countess would give, though she could ill afford to do so, resolved not to acquaint her with it. By some means, however, her ladyship heard of the case, and likewise of the combination of the ministers to conceal it, with which conduct she was exceedingly grieved, and, the moment she saw Captain Scott, said she could not have thought it of him. She burst into tears, and exclaimed, 'I have never taken any ill at your hands before, but this I think is very unkind.'

She then gave five hundred dollars to the case."*

John Wesley followed the rule of doing good of every possible sort to the souls and the bodies of men.

Perceiving how much the poor suffered for the want of proper medical treatment, he opened an office in London for gratuitous advice and free distribution of medicine. Having acquired at the university some knowledge of the medical profession, and adopting a simple mode of practice, he was able, by being in the office certain hours of the day when he was in the city, to render valuable service.

Seeing the embarrassments of honest tradesmen for the want of money to start in business, he established for their benefit a kind of "Mutual Loan Stock." His aim was to prevent the payment of unreasonable interest. He went from one acquaintance to another who could command ready money, and persuaded them to loan money to the stock. The fund was then intrusted to the hands of two stewards, who were ready every Tuesday morning to lend small sums for a limited time to those who gave assurances of need and integrity. During the first year of this enterprise two hundred and fifty persons were assisted.

He established an asylum for poor widows. By appealing to the rich, money was obtained

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* "Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon."

for a building, and by the collections in the societies means were secured to make comfortable a large number, who found, in this Christian retreat, a quiet enjoyment they could not otherwise have obtained.

We have already noticed the measures which were begun by Whitefield and carried out by Wesley, for improving the condition of the children at Kingswood. Care for the bodily and spiritual wants of children was ever a prominent object with him. He used his extensive acquaintance and great influence with the wealthy to secure the means of their support (when destitute) and of their education.

Following up his plans for the mental as well as religious improvement of his people, Wesley wrote many religious tracts for gratuitous distribution. As early as 1744, we find nearly fifty tracts published by the two brothers, some of which have on the title-page, "Not to be sold, but given away." In the year 1787, they printed a sheet "catalogue," containing no less than two hundred and sixty-five works published by them, rising in price from one penny to one shilling or eighteen-pence, to meet the case of the poor, and some of them in the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh edition.

John Wesley prepared books for children. He published elementary works for the study of the English, French, Latin and Greek languages. He prepared and sent forth from the

press concise works (in a popular form) on English, Roman, and church history, and a treatise on Natural Philosophy. To meet the wants of the masses more fully, he published a "Christian Library" of select works, in fifty volumes. In the course of his life he sent forth, in connection with his brother Charles Wesley, several volumes of poetry, written mostly by the latter, some of the hymns being written by other members of the Wesley family and some selected. Besides the above publications, he printed volumes of sermons, journals, &c., which would make a respectable catalogue of issues from the press even for our own day of steam and power-presses.

These statements are in place in this connection; for these books were made a public gratuity in a manner we shall hereafter more fully explain.

Some men have a tact for inducing others to give without drawing liberally upon their own resources. But Wesley influenced others to give by the force of his own example. "His liberality knew no bounds but an empty pocket. He gave away not merely a part of his income, but all that he had. His own wants being provided for, he devoted all the rest to the necessities of others. He entered upon this good work at a very early period. We are told that when he had thirty pounds a year he lived on twenty-eight and gave away forty shillings. The next year, receiving sixty

pounds, he still lived on twenty-eight, and gave away thirty-two pounds. The third year he received ninety pounds, and gave away sixty-two. The fourth year he received one hundred and twenty pounds. Still he lived on twenty-eight, and gave to the poor ninety-two. During the rest of his life he lived economically; and in the course of fifty years it has been supposed he gave away more than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. When nearly ninety years of age, he made with a trembling hand the following last financial entry in his journal:—'I shall keep no more accounts. It must suffice that I give to God all I can,—that is, all I have.'"

The means for this large charity was obtained mostly from the sale of his books. His motto was to "save all he could and give all he could." In consequence of his connection in his later years with a numerous people, he was accused of making himself rich. With this impression the commissioners of government, in 1776, sent him the following note:—

"REVEREND SIR:—As the commissioners cannot doubt that you have plate for which you have hitherto neglected to make an entry, they have directed me to send you a copy of the lords' order, and to inform you that they expect that you forthwith make the entry of all your plate, such entry to bear date from the commencement of the plate duty, or from such time as you have

owned, used, had or kept any quantity of silver plate, chargeable by the act of Parliament, as in default thereof the board will be obliged to signify your refusal to their lordships.

"N. B.—An immediate answer is requested."

To this note Mr. Wesley thus replied:—

"SIR:—I have two silver tea-spoons at London and two at Bristol. This is all the plate which I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many around me want bread.

"I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

When Wesley was travelling at one time in Ireland, his carriage became fixed in the mire, and the harness broke. While he was labouring with his companion to extricate himself from this difficulty, a poor man in great distress passed that way. He said that his family were about to be turned from their home for an unpaid rent of twenty shillings. He had tried every expedient to raise money, but still he lacked that amount. "Is that all?" says Wesley, giving the man more than that amount; "here, go and be happy;" and, turning to his companion, he said, pleasantly, "You see now why our carriage stopped here in the mud."

While travelling on foot to an appointment with one of the preachers, being overtaken by

a shower they stopped at a cottage. The time during the rain was improved by religious conversation and prayer. The occupant of the house proved to be a widow, with whose piety and poverty Wesley was deeply moved. As they retired, he slipped a piece of coin into her hand. Having regained the road, he turned to the preacher, and said, with emotion, "Thomas, did you see that tear when I gave her the money? What fools are they who deny themselves the pleasure of such sights when they can purchase them so cheap!"

Thus this extraordinary man sowed beside all waters, by organizing benevolent societies, stimulating the love of giving of the rich, inducing the poor as well as the wealthy to cultivate habits of economy; and especially by his own example, he was directly and indirectly the instrument of putting in circulation for the promotion of morality and religion a great amount of money.

Who will adopt his principles of saving and giving, and do what they can?

CHAPTER XIX.

FURTHER ILLUSTRATIONS OF CHARACTER.

In the course of this narrative we have presented the facts concerning John Wesley, which exhibit him as the director of a numerous religious people. We have seen him also engaged constantly in travelling, preaching, delivering frequent public addresses, and leading almost daily the devotions of social circles for prayer and religious instruction. "For forty-two years and upwards he generally delivered two, frequently three or four, sermons in a day. But, calculating at two sermons a day, and allowing, as a writer of his life has done, fifty annually for extraordinary occasions, the whole number during this period will be forty thousand five hundred and sixty. To these we are to add a great number of exhortations to societies after preaching and in other occasional meetings at which he assisted." In addition to these public duties of governing the societies and preaching, it will be recollected that his pen was always at work. His "Journals," published letters, tracts on various practical subjects, sermons, grammars, works on philosophy, history and science, with various

1 2 3
HAMILTON, WESLEY AND COE,
As seen walking in the streets of Edinburg in 1790.

volumes abridged for his "Christian Library," all together make an amount of reading matter truly astonishing, when we remember the other labour amid which it was prepared for the press. An interesting question occurs:—how was so much accomplished? Fortunately, we are able to answer somewhat fully this question. For more than sixty years he rose at four o'clock. The quiet of the morning was devoted to prayer, reading, and the labours of the pen. That he might do this, he retired at an early and stated hour, even though he was enjoying an evening of the most delightful conversation with friends. He records the remarkable fact of his power to command sleep the instant he threw himself upon his couch. Thus his moments in bed were all improved to restore the strength of the physical and mental powers for their extraordinary exertions.

No man perhaps ever exceeded John Wesley in his high appreciation and practical improvement of time. He was mindful to improve not days and hours only, but moments.

One day his chaise was not at the door at the required time. He had put up his pen and left his study. When it arrived, he remarked, "You have caused me to lose ten minutes forever!"

A friend of easy habits once said to him, to restrain his purpose of leaving immediately, "You need not be in a hurry, sir." "A hurry!" replied Wesley; "no, I have no time

to be in a hurry." He did every thing quietly and with apparent slowness.

The eccentric and learned Dr. Samuel Johnson said to Mrs. Hall, a sister of Wesley, with whom he was intimate, "I like your brother much, but he is never at leisure; he must always go at an appointed moment. This is very disagreeable to one who loves to fold his legs and have his talk out, as I do."

For many years Wesley read on horseback; at a later period he studied and wrote in his carriage, giving the reins to his travelling companion, or, if alone, committing his safety to the steady habits of his horse. Few certainly could do this; but the kind providence of God favoured Wesley's determined energy, and from this practice he derived great advantage.

To his industry Wesley united the most exact order. An intimate friend, who knew him many years, says he never saw his study in disorder,—not even a book or an article of furniture displaced. No article of his apparel was ever out of place, nor improperly adjusted when he had dressed. He was always ready to leave his room to go before the public congregation, to visit the sick, or to receive the calls of friendship and of business. In connection with his improvement of time and order, we should remember that he devoted an hour in the morning and in the evening to private prayer. He says, "I allow no pretence nor excuse whatever to interfere with

these hours." When we remember how he was often situated, this practice will impress us with the severity of his self-discipline.

As the result perhaps in part of his economy of time and in part of natural temperament, he expressed himself briefly, sometimes peremptorily and sternly. There was not unfrequently in these expressions a sharpness which wounded his friends and offended those not charitably disposed. Wesley was aware of this weakness, and generally avoided it; but when it was for a moment indulged he was ready promptly to correct himself. Most of his brief replies are full of kindness and wisdom. One of his followers once asked advice concerning his future course. He was oppressed with poverty and had a dependent family. In these circumstances a rich relative proposed to give him an ample fortune, on condition that he would withdraw from all active interest in the societies and enjoy his income. In answer to the question, "What shall I do? May I not serve God in a more quiet, retired way?" Wesley replied, "Now, John, is your time to provide a future competency for your family, to secure for yourself position and influence in the world; but remember, John, you have a soul to save." John took the hint, and rejected the fortune.

The Rev. Henry Moore, who became subsequently one of Wesley's biographers, was travelling in the early part of his ministry.

He says, "I sometimes travelled all day, preached three or four times, and had no food except a turnip or a carrot by the roadside. Once I borrowed a fellow-labourer's coat while mine was being patched." In this state of affairs he wrote to Mr. Wesley, under whom he was preaching, and requested his help. The following is a copy of the letter he received in reply:—

"DEAR HENRY:—'Unto you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake.' Take the cup with thankfulness.

"I am, dear Henry, your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."

The following is strikingly characteristic:—

"Mr. Joseph Bradford was for some years the travelling companion of Mr. Wesley, for whom he would have sacrificed health and even life, but to whom his will would never bend except in meekness.

"'Joseph,' said Mr. Wesley one day, 'take these letters to the post.'

"'I will take them after preaching, sir.'

"'Take them now, Joseph.'

"'I wish to hear you preach, sir; and there will be sufficient time for the post after service.'

"'I insist upon you going now, Joseph.'

"'I will not go at present.'

"'You won't?'

"'No, sir.'

"'Then you and I must part.'

"'Very good, sir.'

"The good men slept over it. Both were early risers. At four o'clock the next morning the refractory 'helper' was accosted with—'Joseph, have you considered what I said?—that we must part?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'And must we part?'

"'Please yourself, sir.'

"'Will you ask my pardon, Joseph?'

"'No, sir.'

"'You won't?'

"'No, sir.'

"'Then I will ask your's, Joseph.'

"Poor Joseph was instantly melted."

On one of his visits to Liverpool, during a season of unusual destitution and suffering among the poor, Wesley was surrounded with importunate beggars. They had learned by experience that he was a "cheerful giver." His purse being soon emptied, he was just stepping into his carriage, when a fresh and more solicitous party assailed him. As he shut the carriage-door, he exclaimed, "I have no more to give; can I feed all the poor of Liverpool?" As the carriage moved off, he threw himself thoughtfully for some time into a corner. Then, arousing himself, he said, feelingly, "I was wrong. I could have given them soft

words at least, though I had no more money to give."

It was a harder lesson to learn to bear patiently the loss of his good name,—to aim to do good, and yet to be accused of seeking to do evil,—to conscientiously endeavour to go about doing good, and yet to be reviled as a "pestilent fellow." He was called to bear many such tests of willingness to suffer the loss of all things for Christ's sake. His niece—Miss Sarah Wesley, the daughter of Charles Wesley, whose old age came down to our own day—relates the following incident, which will be interesting in this connection. Her uncle had promised to call on a certain day at her father's residence and take her to Canterbury. She was but a child, and the promised ride was anticipated with great delight. But in the mean time Mrs. John Wesley had caused to be circulated in her father's neighbourhood reports unfavourable to her husband's character, professedly founded upon letters to his female correspondents which she had intercepted. Miss Sarah Wesley says, "My dear father, to whom the reputation of my uncle was far dearer than his own, immediately saw the importance of refutation, and set off to the foundry to induce him to postpone his journey, while I in my own mind was lamenting the disappointment I must in consequence experience. Never shall I forget the manner in which my father accosted my mother on his return home. 'My

brother,' said he, 'is indeed an extraordinary man. I placed before him the importance of the character of a minister,—the evil consequences which might result from indifference to it to the cause of religion,—stumbling-blocks cast in the way of the weak,—and urged him by every relative and public motive to answer for himself and stop the intended publication of the letters. His reply was, "Brother, when I devoted to God my ease, my time, my life, did I except my reputation? No; tell Sally I will take her to Canterbury to-morrow!"'" Miss Wesley adds that "the letters in question were satisfactorily proved to be mutilated, and no scandal resulted from his trust in God."

CHAPTER XX.

OLD AGE—"THE LAST OF EARTH."

HAVING been made somewhat acquainted with the labours and character of Wesley, it would be pleasing as nearly as possible to see him in his old age. We must place in our mind's picture a man much below the common stature, slight in form,—that is, altogether a little man,—with an eye bright and piercing, and an aquiline nose, with locks as white as

falling snow, and a fair complexion and smooth forehead, though about eighty-eight years have passed over him. Approaching such an age and still labouring, let us for a few moments follow and see and hear him.

Upon entering his seventy-second year he thus speaks:—"How is this, that I find just the same strength as I did thirty years ago? that my sight is considerably better now and my nerves firmer than they were then? that I have none of the infirmities of old age and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand cause is the good pleasure of God, who does whatsoever pleaseth him. The chief means are my constantly rising at four for about fifty years; my generally preaching at five in the morning,—one of the most healthy exercises in the world; my never travelling less by sea or land than four thousand five hundred miles a year; the ability, if ever I want, to sleep immediately; the never losing a night's sleep in my life; two violent fevers and two deep consumptions. These, it is true, were rough medicines, but they were of admirable service, causing my flesh to come again as the flesh of a little child. May I add, lastly, evenness of temper?—I *feel* and *grieve*, but, by the grace of God, I *fret* at nothing. But still the help that is done upon earth, He doeth it himself; and this he doth in answer to my prayers."

On entering his eighty-sixth year he ex-

claims, "How little have I suffered yet by 'the rush of numerous years!' I do not find any decay in my hearing, smell, taste, or appetite, (though I want but a third part of the food I did once;) nor do I feel any such thing as weariness either in travelling or preaching. And I am not conscious of any decay in writing sermons, which I do as readily and I believe as correctly as ever."

And this old age, so favoured of God, was honoured by men. When he was eighty-six years of age, he visited Falmouth. At this place in his early itinerating he had suffered great persecution, and here Whitefield was nearly killed for preaching Christ. Now a wonderful change has taken place. Forty years have rolled away, and the seed sown has produced a rich harvest. Dense crowds thronged the streets, and eager spectators filled the balconies and windows. As Wesley pressed his way through, handkerchiefs waved, and shouts rent the air, more sincere and joyful than ever hailed a triumphant warrior. Many thousand persons followed him to the side of a green hill near the sea-shore, to hear the words of the honoured old man.

Perhaps no fact shows more impressively the frame of his mind in old age than the unaffected love he felt for youth and children. Little incidents sometimes indicate great truths. One of the last times he preached, a little child had sat down on the narrow stairs leading to

the pulpit. As Wesley passed he took the child in his arms and gently kissed it, and, returning it to its chosen seat, passed into the desk.

The poet, Robert Southey, in disclaiming only a few years before his death, to a distinguished Wesleyan preacher, any intention of wronging Wesley by the sentiments contained in the biography he had written of him, related the following interesting incident:—"I may have been mistaken, (in my views of him;) but an enemy of John Wesley I could not be. Some of my earliest recollections and associations are in his favour. When I was a mere child, I was in a house in Bristol where he was. On running down-stairs before him with a beautiful little sister of my own, whose ringlets were floating over her shoulders, he overtook us on the landing, when he took my sister in his arms and kissed her. Placing her on her feet again, he then put his hand upon my head and blessed me; and I feel," continued the bard, highly impassioned, his eyes glistening with tears, and yet in a tone of tender and grateful recollection,—"I feel as though I had the blessing of that good man upon me at the present moment."

When Wesley was leaving England on his last visit to Ireland, a son of one of his early and warm friends was introduced to him. Wesley at once feelingly inquired of the young man if he was a child of God. On being an-

swered in the negative, Wesley lifted up his eyes towards heaven, his hands clasped as if in earnest prayer, while the tears stole silently down his venerable face. In a few moments he bade the child of his sainted friend an affectionate adieu. On his return from Ireland he was met by a messenger, ere his vessel had reached the shore, with the news that the young man had professed saving faith in Christ. The news quite overcame him; and he burst into tears and returned thanks aloud to God.

Everywhere the youth and children crowded about him for his blessing. At Sheffield, when he was about eighty-seven years of age, so impressed were the people that they should see his face no more, that they made the help of a friend necessary to open his way through the crowd from the preaching-place to his lodgings. When with difficulty he reached it, he found it surrounded with children and the poor, who had gone there to make sure of his blessing. On attempting to speak to them, his voice was drowned by their loud weeping,—"sorrowing that they should see his face no more."

To the very last of his life the boys at the school in Kingswood were the subjects of his paternal care. When he was visiting them, as he thought, for the last time, two lads were brought before him by the master under the grave charge of fighting. Silently he led them to his own room, and called for the supper of which he was about to partake. He requested

the boys to eat together with him. After they had eaten, he said, "Now, my children, you have eaten together, and you should love each other. Go with my blessing, and be friends."

The boys lost their enmity towards each other; and after many years one of these boys, on a judge's bench, related the circumstance as we have given it, and its happy effect upon his mind.

We close these illustrations with the testimony of a friend, Mr. Knox, who knew him for twenty-five years, but who was not of his connection and differed from him in doctrinal sentiments. He says, "Very lately (1789, less than two years before Wesley's death) I had an opportunity for some days together of observing Mr. Wesley with attention. I endeavoured to consider him not so much with the eye of a friend as the impartiality of the philosopher; and, I must declare, every hour I spent in his company afforded me fresh reasons for esteem and veneration. So fine an old man I never saw! The happiness of his mind beamed forth in his countenance. Every look showed how fully he enjoyed

The gay remembrance of a life well spent.

Wherever he went he diffused a portion of his own felicity. Easy and affable in his demeanour, he accommodated himself to every sort of company, and showed how happily the most finished courtesy may be blended with the

most perfect piety. In his conversation we might be at a loss which to admire most,—his fine classical taste, his extensive knowledge of men and things, or his overflowing goodness of heart. While the grave and serious were charmed with his wisdom, his sportive sallies of innocent mirth delighted even the young and thoughtless; and both saw, in his uninterrupted cheerfulness, the excellency of true religion. No cynical remarks on the levity of youth embittered his discourse. No applausive retrospect to past times marked his present discontent. In him even old age appeared delightful, like an evening without a cloud; and it was impossible to observe him without wishing fervently, 'May my latter end be like his!'"

But Wesley began now to feel and acknowledge that the infirmities of age were upon him. On entering his eighty-seventh year, he says, "I now find I grow old. My sight is decayed, so that I cannot read a small print, except in a strong light. My strength is decayed, so that I walk much slower than I did some years since. My memory of names, whether of persons or places, is decayed; I am obliged to stop a little to recollect them."

At the beginning of the following year, (1790,) he adds, "I am now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim. My right hand shakes much. My mouth is hot and dry every morning. I have a lingering fever almost every day. My motion is

weak and slow. However, blessed be God, I do not slack my labour. I can preach and write still."

Yet he continued to rise at four o'clock, and went through the duties of the day without complaint and with astonishing resolution. He said, "I would yet do a little for God before I drop into the dust."

While thus waiting for the Head of the church to say, "Come up higher," he one day stood before an immense audience at the City Road Chapel, London. The occasion had called up moving recollections of the past and the solemn future. He felt at that moment that of all the friends of his great labour he stood almost alone. His brothers and sisters, with the exception of one sister, were gone. He was enraptured with the hope of a speedy and eternal re-union. Standing up before the congregation with closed eyes, and seeming entirely absorbed in the theme, he repeated verse by verse the following hymn by his brother Charles, which the whole congregation united in singing:—

Come, let us join our friends above,
Who have obtain'd the prize,
And on the eagle-wings of love
To joys celestial rise.

Let all the saints terrestrial sing,
With those to glory gone;
For all the servants of our King
In earth and heaven are one.

One family we dwell in him,
  The church above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream—
  The narrow stream—of death.

One army of the living God,
  To his command we bow;
Part of his hosts have cross'd the flood,
  And part are crossing now.

Ten thousand to their endless home
  This solemn moment fly;
And we are to the margin come,
  And we expect to die.

* * * *

Lord Jesus! be our constant guide;
  And, when the word is given,
Bid death's cold flood its waves divide,
  And land us safe in heaven.

Wesley's deep emotion, the impressive circumstances in which the words were uttered, and the song as it swelled in tender strains from a thousand voices, made this a memorable occasion.

On Wednesday, February 23, 1791, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, he preached his last sermon. He closed the service by repeating the words of a favourite verse:—

Oh that without a lingering groan
  I may the welcome word receive;
My body with my charge lay down,
  And cease at once to work and live.

He returned home unwell, and was soon prostrate with increasing disease. The next day, rousing from a brief wandering of mind, he

said, with a distinct voice, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. That is the foundation," he continued,—"the only foundation. There is no other. How necessary it is for every one to be on the right foundation!

"I the chief of sinners am,
Yet Jesus died for me."

So rapidly, though gently, did he approach the hour of his dissolution, that on Tuesday he made several unsuccessful attempts to speak. Rallying at length his little remaining strength, he lifted up his dying arms in token of victory, and cried out, "The best of all is, God is with us." After a short pause, he repeated, "The best of all is, God is with us." As eternity drew nearer, he whispered, "He causeth his servants to lie down in peace;" "The Lord is with us, and the God of Jacob is our refuge." On Wednesday morning he gently sunk into the arms of death.

Life's labour done, as sinks the clay,
Light from its load the spirit flies,
While heaven and earth combine to say,
"How blest the righteous when he dies!"

Our narrative may be appropriately closed with the observations of one who visited the grave of Wesley as lately as the year 1854:—

"Exactly opposite Bunhill-fields burial-

ground stands 'The City Road Chapel,' and at the rear of the chapel is the grave surmounted by the monument of 'WESLEY.'

"The monument holds the most conspicuous place in this small burial-ground, and lifts up its head in the midst of graves occupied by the elder members of that great family of which he was the father. Its inscription gives the second of March, 1791, as the day when, to quote a favourite line,—

The weary wheels of life stood still at last.

On that day this venerable man was nearly eighty-eight years of age, and when the minister who read the funeral service at his grave —the Rev. Mr. Richardson, who now lies with him in the same vault—substituted for the expression 'our dear brother' the epithet 'father,' the effect was so powerful that the congregation 'seemed universally to burst into loud weeping.' His funeral took place between five and six in the morning, and it was necessary to decide on that early hour to avoid a tumult; so great had been the crowds who went to see the corpse while it lay in the coffin in the adjoining house and afterwards in the chapel the day before the funeral. We need not the marble tablet to tell us that he was, 'in zeal, ministerial labours, and extensive usefulness, superior, perhaps, to all men, since the days of St. Paul;' or that, 'regardless of fatigue, personal danger, and disgrace, he went into

the highways and hedges calling sinners to repentance and publishing the gospel of peace;' or that he was the founder of the Methodist societies, and the chief promoter and patron of the plan of itinerant preaching, which he extended through Great Britain and Ireland, the West Indies and America, with so great success.

"When God sent his servant Ezekiel to 'the rebellious nation that rebelled against him,' he promised that, whether they would hear or whether they would forbear, they should know that there had been a prophet among them. Multitudes of our countrymen, through the great grace of God, have heard the message delivered by the prophet he has sent to us; and, while we pray to be kept from the hypocrisy and self-deception of those who 'built the tombs of the prophets and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous,' we look with emotions of gratitude at the tomb which marks the resting-place of the mortal remains of this man of God, and cheerfully obey the counsel it affords:—

"'READER, IF THOU ART CONSTRAINED TO ADMIRE THE INSTRUMENT, GIVE GOD THE GLORY.'"

THE END.

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